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THE NEW BROOM IN LONDON

MR. HERBERT MORRISON is the best possible appointment for Home Secretary at this moment. His job as Minister of Supply may be done equally well by Sir Andrew Duncan. But in so far as any man can undo the incalculable evil done by Sir John Anderson in his treatment of our refugee allies and in his neglect of an honest shelter policy, Mr. Morrison would seem to be the man to put in charge. An East-Ender himself, with long years of experience of London government and a deservedly high reputation at the L.C.C., Mr. Morrison has the necessary energy, knowledge and ability. His appointment is the most important change in the Government. The retirement of Mr. Chamberlain, who is, we are sorry to hear, seriously ill, has long been expected. His place as Lord President is taken by Sir John Anderson, but his place in the War Cabinet is taken by Sir Kingsley Wood and Mr. Bevin, who will bring an important addition of strength to the Labour contingent. Amongst the other appointments we notice that Sir John Reith becomes a peer and Minister of Works. Colonel Moore-Brabazon should do well as Minister of Transport, while Lord Cranborne seems a sensible substitute at the Dominions Office for Lord Caldecote, who has always been absurd as a politician, but who may be less inadequate as Lord Chief Justice. Lord Hewart retires and becomes a Viscount.

Mr. Morrison arrives at a moment when the public (including M.P.s who represent East London) have just wakened to the administrative chaos in the most severely hit areas. It will not be necessary to tell Mr. Morrison that things cannot be left to Mr. Willink, who, whatever his other qualifications, knows nothing of the East End and explains that his job is to persuade local authorities to use the powers they already have! He may find more hope in the services of Sir Edward Evans, who is unlikely to share Sir John Anderson's fantastic prejudice against the security and rest of underground shelters. The most sensible policy would seem to be to open all the grand basement shelters in the City, many of which are now closed at nights, to scoop out further "headings" or tunnels from the undergrounds, open more unused tubes and run charabancs at night to take people to places in shelters for which it may be sensible to issue tickets.

The brightest promise so far has come from the Ministry of Food which is already organising communal feeding centres and mobile canteens on a considerable scale. In addition, every factory-worker should be assured of a good meal every day at the factory; in large factories it will usually be best for this meal to be provided by the employers. Financial difficulties could be eased by permitting special expenditure for meals to be an allowance out of profits—which would be a sensible form of Government subsidy. Other urgent problems of East London are dealt with in another article in this issue. They include the disgraceful sanitation in shelters, the danger of epidemics, the need for a humane and coherent policy for dealing with the homeless and the almost homeless, and the necessity of using the often unused homes of the rich as part of a swift and humane evacuation policy.

When is an Enemy an Enemy?

Spain is not yet ready to risk active war to oblige the Axis: she will wait till our prospects look a little blacker than they do to-day. That in brief is the upshot of Señor Suñer's talk with Mussolini, as Signor Gayda has interpreted it. We do not doubt that General Franco is absolutely committed to the cause of the Axis, but since Spain is in the last stages of exhaustion and depends on imported food which can enter her ports only with our consent, he prefers to postpone his active belligerency to the last available minute. The rumour had been current that Hitler proposed to send German troops through France into Spain to take Gibraltar, with or without Franco's leave. If this threat was ever used, it seems to have been postponed. But until the Axis dare launch an attack on Gibraltar, can it make much of its Mediterranean campaign, which was to be its *Ersatz* for the invasion of this island?

Then may we congratulate ourselves that we still hold Gibraltar? That would be so, if we dared to use it to close the Straits to our enemies. But again this week three destroyers from enslaved France were allowed to steam past it into the Atlantic unmolested. The Admiralty, when questioned, referred inquiries to the Foreign Office, but it was silent. It is said that Vichy's ships are less dangerous to us in the Atlantic than at Toulon. That fatuous argument forgets that the previous squadron of three cruisers and three destroyers which we allowed to pass went to Dakar and there helped to wreck General de Gaulle's venture in West Africa. It seems that Lord Halifax cannot bring himself to treat the *Etat Français*, which has superseded the dead *République Française* at Vichy, as anything but friendly. It is obtrusively Christian: it has even begun to persecute Jews and it keeps the " reds " in their place. None the less, on two successive days its planes, to the number it is said of 150, have bombarded Gibraltar. Which looks to us like the conduct of one of the King's enemies, or was it in Lord Halifax's view an act of God?

The Indian Deadlock

The Indian problem grows steadily more complicated and hopeless. Mr. Gandhi's two talks with the Viceroy have ended, as usual, in a deadlock and on this occasion we cannot blame Lord Linlithgow. Fearing that Congress would perish, if it remained inactive, Mr. Gandhi proposed that it should conduct a pacifist campaign against all war in general and this war in particular. That may well be within its rights, but it appears from the Viceroy's letter, which Mr. Gandhi accepts as an accurate record of their talks, that Congress proposed to include the munition-workers and troops in its campaign, though Mr. Gandhi " personally " would not insist on addressing these workers at their factories. That obviously no government would tolerate. Mr. Gandhi asks whether he can be expected to keep silence, over a matter of conscientious conviction. But the odd part of this business is that only a minority of Congress shares his conviction. Its governing body had by a majority vote expressly rejected Mr. Gandhi's pacifist doctrine in its international bearings. It subsequently rescinded this resolution in order to induce Mr. Gandhi to resume his active leadership. But these nice matters of conscience are only a shadow play: the real issue is the old one of national independence. Indians are resolved on martyrdom, and the occasion is a secondary matter. Their case against this war is that we shovelled them into it without their consent. The Working Committee of Congress will have to decide next week whether it will now launch its prohibited campaign. But this is not the only deadlock that faces us in India. Mr. Jinnah has now, like Congress, rejected the Viceroy's invitation to enter his enlarged Council, but for very different reasons. He claimed more offices or more important offices for his own faction than Lord Linlithgow would concede, and sought also to reduce the Hindu representation. More than ever it is clear that the Cabinet must authorise Mr. Amery to make a new start on other and more generous lines.

The Postman's Delays

The behaviour of the Post Office under the Blitzkrieg makes a baffling study. Is it getting better, as some tell us? Have the watchers on the roof of the G.P.O. solved the problem? We do not know, for our own experience presents a mass of contradictions. Here are two. A copy of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION posted near Blackfriars Bridge on Thursday night was delivered in Hampstead first thing on Friday morning. But an official letter from a Ministerial office in Westminster posted there on that same Friday was delivered in Hampstead the following Tuesday. But such delays are a trifle, when compared with those that occur in the delivery of air-mail. A letter dated August 30th and posted in New York State was delivered in Hampstead on September 22nd. Another from the same place dated September 8th arrived on October 1st. These letters had crossed the Atlantic in something less than 30 hours. The rest of the three weeks they must have lain on the desk of Examiner XYZ while she knitted socks in her shelter. Is it decent of the Post Office to charge 1*s*. 3*d*. per half-ounce for such a service?

Notes on War Economics

[FROM AN INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT]

The cost of living went up two points last month—to 87 per cent. above the 1914 level. That is, according to the official figures, which do not mean a great deal nowadays, owing to the divergences between controlled and uncontrolled prices. As the controlled prices are, on the whole, much more fully represented in the index than the uncontrolled, it is probable that for most working-class people the rise is substantially greater than the figures show. In any case, the index is of course badly out of date and ought to have been superseded long ago. But for the war, it would have been superseded by now; but with work on the revised index postponed owing to war conditions, we seem likely to make shift for some time yet with the old one, which actually regulates the wages of a considerable number of workers under sliding scales. But I can find few housewives who admit that the official figures now bear much relation to their own costs.

* * *

The Treasury has now finally stopped the hole through which it was possible for companies to remove their headquarters from Great Britain in the hope of reducing their liability to taxation. It was high time; for if the Great Boulder Proprietary Gold Mines had been allowed to move their registration to Australia a regular trek of companies registered here but carrying on business in the Dominions might easily have set in. Companies which have taken advantage of the facilities of London registration in normal times have clearly no claim to be allowed to run away now; and there would have been a very proper outcry if Sir Kingsley Wood had not taken action to stop Mr. Bernales from proceeding with his flit. The mystery is that the restriction was not imposed sooner as part of the general wartime control of the City's financial operations. It is the natural corollary of the control of foreign exchange dealings which has been in force ever since the outbreak of war.

* * *

Why is training for war work going so slowly in the majority of areas? Largely because the scheme of training allowances is hopelessly inadequate. Worked out at a time when the expected trainees were mainly long-term unemployed already subsisting on the dole, the scheme offered rates which were only a very little above what the man could draw from the U.A.B. The Ministry of Labour has now revised its rates, so as to add a shilling or two to the weekly allowances; but this is tinkering with the problem. The very best material for training for skilled war work consists not of long unemployed or of unskilled workers, but of highly skilled men, such as compositors, whose skill can be fairly quickly adapted to war trades in which there is an acute shortage of labour. It is fantastic to expect such men to accept rates which mean a very sharp fall in their standard of life—in many cases actually less than they can get from their Unions and from the State when they are unemployed. If we want the best men in the less essential trades to train themselves to become skilled munition workers, the right course is to pay them rates which take account of their skill, and not to put them on a dead level with unskilled workers who are being trained for much less skilled and valuable work. There has been some improvement of late in the organisation of training facilities; but no one seems yet to have faced up to the financial implications of trying to turn skilled printers or bootmakers or textile operatives into skilled machine-workers in the war trades by adapting their existing skill to the new uses.

* * *

What is happening to the host of shopkeepers who have either been driven from their shops by the evacuation of coastal areas, or bombed out of them? We have here already in progress a mass confiscation of

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General
Fafon

property rights which would provoke the most tremendous outcry if it were happening to richer or more influential people. I was speaking to a garage owner the other day. He said: "If this place is hit, my life savings and my job go with it." Another friend of mine, a small builder, has been kept out of his yard for more than a week, waiting for a time bomb to go off. He has no tools, no ladders, no materials, and no lorry—for he cannot go near them. If the bomb goes off, and they are destroyed, where will he be? Confiscation of property has its merits, where it is equitably applied; but this sort of confiscation has no sort of equity about it. Yet we are still waiting for the Government to say something about compensation for war damage; and in the meantime every day bombs go off, evacuation proceeds, customers disappear, and small traders are ruined. The miracle is that they put up with it with so little complaint; but for how long will they, if nothing is done?

THE NEW TRIPLE ALLIANCE

THIS war conformed to logic when in Berlin, last week, Japan signed a treaty of military alliance with Germany and Italy. The three "Have-nots" joined their forces to despoil the "Haves." This pact was from the first as inevitable as it is intelligible. All three Powers lacked what the rest of us possess in abundance—raw materials and elbow-room. They need not get in each other's way, unless the two Europeans should quarrel over the Balkans. "The New Order in East Asia" does not impinge on "the New Order in Europe." The first draft of this alliance was made when the same three Powers concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact. Japan was annoyed when Hitler stultified it in his deal with Stalin, but under Prince Konoye's openly Fascist dispensation, she has recovered her good temper with her appetite. This alliance means that the three totalitarian Great Powers will work together, now and hereafter, to dismember the British, French and Dutch empires. The Japanese have already occupied and, in effect, appropriated French Indo-China. They describe the process, with the official humour customary on such occasions, as a step designed to safeguard the integrity of this French colony.

This alliance had, however, a more immediate purpose. It was designed to intimidate the United States and prevent her eventual entry into the war as a belligerent. Should she come in, it binds Japan to fight in the ranks of the Axis. The gain to Germany in that event would be appreciable. The Japanese Fleet would prey on British commerce and might find in Hong Kong an easy prize. Our strength would have to be diverted to the defence of Malaya, the Dutch Indies and British Borneo. Distance might be at first a sufficient protection for the two Dominions of the Pacific. What Germany and Italy could do for Japan is not obvious, save to mobilise their Fifth Columns in the United States. On the other hand, Japan would have to face the American Fleet, operating no longer from its distant base in Hawaii, but from Singapore as well as Manila. Japanese shipping would be exposed in every sea and the island metropolis of the New Order subjected to a long-distance blockade.

We need not guess what would happen, if and when the stronger American Fleet with some British and possibly Dutch backing met Japan's warships in the open. A decision in this struggle, if it comes, could be reached by other means. Japan's strength is already taxed beyond her resources by the dragging land-war in China. That indomitable republic would become, in fact and perhaps in name, the ally of the two Western Democracies, which would, of course, assist it with money, arms, 'planes and, perhaps, with technicians also. But even without direct aid to China, the United States and the British Empire have it in their power, if the Dutch colonies joined them, to cripple Japan within a few months by the passive use of the economic weapon. She depends on them for 85 per cent. of her supplies of oil, for all her rubber, tin, nickel and aluminium, most of her copper and scrap-iron, and about half her supplies of iron ore. From them also she draws her cotton and wool. An embargo on oil alone would bring her to her knees as soon as her reserves were exhausted. That is, indeed, so obvious that one asks whether the treaty, in so far as it is aimed at America, is much more than clumsy bluff.

The problem that now faces Americans is perhaps the gravest in their history. They will not be in a hurry to decide it. If they take up this challenge eventually and enter the war as our ally, they may reckon on ending the peril that threatens them both in Latin America and in the Pacific from the united forces of the Axis. They would have to endure two anxious years of war; they would have to risk some of their ships, and it might be part of their contribution to send an expeditionary force to Europe. But their own soil would not be exposed and the brunt of the battle in the air and at sea would fall on us and on land upon the Chinese. With their aid it is reasonable to hope that the war would end in the capitulation of their enemies, the collapse of the Axis and the end of the totalitarian threat of encirclement. If, on the other hand, they temporise and retain their non-belligerent status, they must face the risk that both we in Europe and the Chinese in Asia may be crushed. In that event they would have to confront the wrath and greed of three enemies without an ally. What is no less important, they would possess no base of operations either in Europe or—since Manila is too vulnerable to be of much use for this purpose—in Asia. It follows that even if they could defend themselves triumphantly in their own hemisphere, they could never hope to destroy their enemies at the centre of their power. On this problem they will doubtless spend some months in reflection, for only a President with a fresh mandate would dare to decide it. We venture no guess.

In the meantime we would urge that the policy both of Great Britain and of the United States should conform itself to the fact that Japan is now their declared, if non-belligerent, enemy. To strengthen her by trading with her would be suicidal. We need nothing that she can send us and American women can do without her silk. She, on the other hand, depends absolutely on the war materials she imports from us. Our motto, as we watch her struggle with China, might well be, "Every impediment short of war." We need waste no words on the Burma Road, for we assume that the decision to reopen it is already taken. Egypt, in other respects a hesitating ally, has led the way by stopping the export of cotton to Japan. It is imperative that India should cease to send her cotton and iron. Need we travel round the map with similar demands as to nickel, copper, wool, rubber, oil and tin to the address of Canada, Australia, Burma and Malaya? The United States, which has once already embargoed motor spirit and scrap iron, needs no exhortation. The Netherlands are now our ally, and they retain their Asiatic empire thanks only to American protection; they, too, must cease to export rubber and oil. They are in acute danger, but they must realise that they would not survive a Japanese victory. We do not suggest formal "sanctions" or any provocative action; it is enough to say, what Mr. Roosevelt has said, that we need all these things for our own war effort. He has set the example of positive help to China by lending her £11,000,000. We, too, must act towards her on the realistic reckoning that by occupying all the land and air forces of Japan, she is fighting our battle against the Axis.

We have still to consider a more distant but still serious aspect of the new Triple Alliance—its bearing on Russia. According to its text it has no such bearing, but manifestly it leaves her isolated. She is no one's friend, unless "a friendship cemented by blood" still binds Stalin to Hitler. What would happen to her if the three allies should succeed in building each in his own Continent their "New Order"? The Kremlin must have been visited this week by its old nightmare—the spectre of a concerted and simultaneous attack on the Ukraine and Siberia by Germany and Japan. How will it react? It might try to appease Japan by once more offering a Pact of Non-aggression, and cutting off its valuable aid to China. That would be a heavy blow, not merely because the arms she sent are sorely needed but also because it would revive the old feud between Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists of the powerful Eighth Route Army. It is believed that von Ribbentrop hopes to rope in Russia shortly as a fourth ally. If Stalin really trusts in Hitler's bloodstained friendship, this would be a likely response. But he has a talent for suspicion, and we find it hard to credit him with this arch simplicity. It is more probable that he will increase his aid to China and his vigilance against his friend. That would not necessarily imply any change in his attitude towards us or the Americans, whom M. Molotov rated in his last speech with especial venom. He will not again make a friendly move towards us, as he did when he proposed trade negotiations last March, until we show a disposition to reciprocate. At present any *rapprochement* is held up, while the Foreign Office presses its pedantic claims to compensation for the losses of British firms in the Baltic States. The sum involved would not suffice to finance the war for a day. But it is probable that if we chose to seize the opportunity of this emergency we could turn the Soviet Union into an actively friendly neutral. In two regions her co-operation is indispensable. One of them is China, whose fate concerns her at least as closely as it concerns us. We closed the Burma Road without consulting her; let us use its reopening to establish the habit of consultation, and to bring America into the circle. The other region is the Middle East. There the best hope for Greece and for Syria, both of them exposed to Italian threats, lies in Turkish assistance. But Turkey is bound at every turn in this intricate game to consider the views of her powerful neighbour. She can do little to fend off Italy, save with Russia's tacit consent. Russia will not give it if she sees no reason to think better of us than she thinks of Italy.

REPORT ON EAST LONDON

THE phrase about everyone in London now being "in the Front Line" takes on a totally new significance as soon as you become acquainted with the position in the East End and dock areas. In the West End we suffer grave inconvenience and we are too easily inclined to imagine that the East End's problems are similar. They are, in fact, quite different, even from those of other poor and severely damaged areas. The numbers of homeless and destitute are many times larger in the East End, and only in the East End do you find acres of uninhabitable houses, most of them reduced to rubble. The general public notices that the casualties are still comparatively small and that fires are being quickly brought under control. The newspapers carry quite truthful stories of the astonishing fortitude and spirit of the East End population. But very few people are remotely aware of the real condition of affairs. Only the *Daily Herald* was immediately on the spot with any realistic picture of what was happening to English people in what is, in the most exact and non-metaphorical sense, the front line of an enormous battle. Most of the Conservative press still burks the unpleasant facts.

One of Hitler's objects, I take it, is to make life in London intolerable and compel people to demand peace at any price. If there is at present no sign of defeatism, that is no credit to the various authorities who have completely failed to grapple with a problem which is not in fact in any way insoluble. Soldiers, condemned in the last war to live in dug-outs in Ypres or Arras, thought themselves lucky to have good cover, regular rations and guns and 'planes to defend them, and in that sense all the East End is still a good billet for those engaged on essential work. As a place for a civilian population to carry on normal life some sectors of it are rapidly becoming a ludicrous and dangerous absurdity. I say "dangerous" because, although in good weather, after only a few weeks' bombing, the morale is high, I have seen and heard enough to know that this is a highly precarious generalisation on which to build if the present type of war lasts through the winter months. There is always danger if people believe they are being neglected. And the danger of serious epidemics is greater still.

This is a complex situation, but the essentials are simple, and I shall concentrate on them. Note first that there is now no political leadership. The leaders of the East End are a number of devoted and disinterested clergy, ministers and doctors. The Boroughs are represented politically by elderly Labour M.P.s, many of whom are out of touch with their constituents. Most of them seem to have abnegated leadership. There are exceptions like Jimmie Hall, and a few councillors like Charlie Key, the Mayor of Poplar, have done all they can. The Councils now count for little. We have to deal with graft as well as inefficiency.

Take first one of the most obvious scandals which must surely be cleared up immediately. Mr. Harrisson wrote in this journal last week of an immense shelter now used by thousands every night. This place, meant as a railway goods store, is regarded locally as the safest shelter in East London and, with a few not at all difficult alterations, it can become so. It needs baffles; locked doors must be opened as emergency exits and there are blackened windows which need to be bricked in. The ground slopes steeply down from the road; wet weather will come and the water must be diverted or the place will be awash. Every night many thousands of people of every sort queue up for this extraordinary shelter. I have seen these people in this place in the early hours of the night; to see and appreciate the atmosphere one should go during the night—if one can stand the stench which is horrifying during the day after the cleaning has been done. Whites, Jews and Gentiles, Chinese, Indians and Negroes lie there miscellaneously. Early in the afternoon people begin to queue up for this shelter and sometimes men rush it in the hope of seizing places and settling down there before it is officially opened. The police have to prevent such raids being successful. The most disquieting part of this place, which, at nights, looks, as a resident said to me, exactly like a bazaar in Cairo, is that the only water tap in the entire place is situated up against the men's lavatory at one end where the stench is worst. When I saw this shelter last week the lavatories at each end consisted only of a dozen men's and fewer women's seats or buckets. At one end where there were only buckets there was no runaway. Those who see this place during the night, tell me that the overflow of urine becomes a mounting pool which laps like a tide up to the blankets of the sleeping multitude. That this was true I could see for myself, for on the next afternoon when I was there, a wide area round the buckets was still wet. A policeman on duty supplied further details. Few people, he said, now even try to climb over the heaped bodies in the darkness and reach the lavatories. They use every part of the building. This process has been helped by the convenience of the margarine in cardboard cases which can be piled up into useful mounds behind which people can do all they desire unobserved.

I am glad to say that last Saturday when I had assured myself of these facts I rang up Mr. Boothby, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Food, who assured me that all the food should be at once removed. He acted promptly and it was, I understand, all out by Tuesday night. This week some considerable improvement has also been made in the lavatory accommodation. There is more of it, but in an enormous and packed shelter there should be accommodation in various parts of the building if everyone is to have a chance of using it. The question remains why, in spite of protests from influential residents to other Ministers and to the local authorities, these conditions have continued for the past three weeks.

The answer is that this place must be used as a shelter for which, with a few alterations, it is eminently suitable. There would be riots if it were not so used. But the local Controller, for reasons I do not understand, refused to recognise it as a shelter. Therefore, officially, the bulk of this building has not been a shelter and, even when instructions were sent from Whitehall, after urgent local representations, the Controller seems to have mislaid or overlooked the instructions sent.

The Homeless

This general administrative failure in East London—as opposed to the brilliantly efficient service of the A.R.P., W.V.S., fire fighters, rescue squads, etc.—is due to two main factors. First that the authorities have ill-defined and overlapping functions. Secondly that the preparations made by the Ministry for Home Security, and Ministry of Health were all based on a conception of the war which has been falsified by events. The most terrible confirmation of the muddle of authorities is the record you will get from any homeless person whom you find wandering among the ruins. Take, for example, a woman and her daughter whom we found in a ruined street just off an area devastated by a large explosion. This woman, after long wandering about, went to one of the departments which should deal with her case. She was sent, in all, to five different addresses in her utterly worn out condition, kept as long as two hours waiting in some cases and finally reached an address where she was told to come back at nine the next morning. We calculated that this involved a walk of five miles. After telling us this story, she turned to a young woman in a small derelict shop at the corner and said, "Have you seen my cat?" "I've fed twenty this morning," said the girl, "what is yours like?" "Mine is a tabby," said the woman. When we left, half a dozen cats had arrived and a tabby was sorted out. The woman went into a house, of which the structure was still standing, with the tabby. Her chief worry was over. The girl at the shop was worth knowing. She was completely cheerful. All the front of her shop was gone, and it seemed to contain nothing except a few bottles of sweets, and chocolate and a few packets of cigarettes. She declared her intention of reopening the shop at once and I bought chocolate for some children near. A young mother told us a similar story of the impossibility of finding what authority would evacuate you, and where to get relief and where to get a meal and so forth. She said naturally, though I know mistakenly, that the authorities "did not care what happened to you."

Much of the breakdown is due, as I said, to a miscalculation about the nature of the war. Everything was done to prepare for death and injury. Tens of thousands of *papier mâché* coffins were ready; excellent hospital arrangements were made; first class ambulance and first aid and nursing arrangements were ready. But no thought had been taken for the living and uninjured homeless. Just why this was I do not understand. Obviously if there were many dead there would also be many homeless. In any case these homeless people are casualties and should be treated as such. Contrast the treatment which victims of raids receive in the West End. People dug out of their shelters are immediately taken off in taxis to hotels, given hot drinks and warm beds in an underground shelter—as they should be. Some of these people, in East London, wandered about for thirteen hours, having lost every possession in the world except what they stood up in, and were directed to a series of addresses which involved as much as eight miles of walking before they were cared for. I suggest that they should be treated as casualties and that some of the idle ambulances and casualty staffs should be used to aid them.

One of the crying needs in all such cases is for some person who knows what facilities exist for relief, food, clothing, evacuation, etc., to be stationed in each area, and to have the duty of looking after these people at once and giving them the information they need. Remember that, in these areas, there is no gas, usually no electricity and often no water. Hot meals are, to some very inadequate extent, being provided in communal kitchens in some parts. The Ministry of Food has moved and the L.C.C. food organisation is good. Some of the clergy have hot meals ready in places where gas and water have both gone. Some of these places are cut off to an extraordinary extent from the rest of London. In one district I found that for some unknown reason the post office was shut, and I met the energetic and devoted priest on his way back from another post office some distance off, where he had been in order to draw an old woman's old age pension. He had found her sitting in a shelter continuously night and day with no means of support or of getting her pension.

Evacuation and Shelters

Obviously a single authority in charge of East London must have power to co-ordinate and overrule these conflicting authorities, and to straighten out these confusions and look after the homeless. The L.C.C. has been efficient, but its powers are limited and do not run at all in County Boroughs. Even now this need of a single authority is not sufficiently realised by the Government. If Sir John Anderson understood what the East End was like, he could not have thought he was coping with the shelter situation by providing beds in surface shelters. Everyone wants to go underground, and, indeed, almost everyone does, even if it means travelling to Hampstead Tube to do so. Few people, if any, sleep in the surface shelters in areas where I inquired. Why? Sir John will understand why if he will spend the night in one of these areas. The shelters have, in general, stood up on the whole remarkably well, as the Anderson shelters have, to blast and splinters. But where a surface shelter is turned into rubble by a direct hit, everyone sees it and no one will enter what is afterwards regarded as a tomb. Moreover, ear plugs are no adequate antidote to the raids in the East End. No one could voluntarily go into a surface shelter and hope to sleep there at night. It is unthinkable if there is any chance at all of getting underground. Incidentally, a lot of the street shelters have no roofs!

Note next that, although the number of casualties have been far less than the authorities expected, it has, to everyone's knowledge in the East End, been greater than the press and wireless suggest. No one knows what the real figures are, because no attempt is made or can be usefully made to dig out the bodies, and there is a general belief in the East End that many bodies still lie under the *débris*. I give one case, about which I know. A house was destroyed and two bodies dug out. It was proposed to stop digging. The priest said it must proceed, because he knew a particular woman must be buried there. Next day three more bodies were found. He insisted that the digging should continue, because the woman had still not been found. A third day's digging found two more bodies. The woman whom the priest looked for was found on the fourth day. No one knows how many have died and the fact that it is less than anyone expected in the Blitzkrieg is not completely satisfying. The demand for the help of soldiers in rescue and demolition work is growing.

A large explosion may make a number of strongly built houses in the West End uninhabitable. In the East End it may utterly destroy several hundred. It will end all possibility of living in a dozen streets. Many of these places have been bombed continuously. A normal or even approximately normal kind of life is impossible. The evacuation of "useless mouths" seems essential. It would be a disastrous mistake to call East London a Defence Area; for that is a technical term, involving martial law and all the rest of it. That is, in my view, exactly the opposite of what is wanted. The discipline and spirit of the East End are wonderful. But call it a dangerous area, or something of that kind, and appoint a person or body with overriding powers. The first aim should be to get rid of all those who need not stay for essential reasons. Could evacuation be made compulsory? I have carefully enquired from those who know the East End best. There is general agreement. If the Ministry were to make evacuation compulsory now, without full provision for the men and girls left working at the docks and in the surviving factories, there would very properly be trouble. The family unit is strong, and women mind about their men. But provide communal feeding, arrange shelters for the night in which men can sleep underground and I was assured that most people will welcome it. Recent bombing has led many to change their minds about evacuation. Moreover the voluntary system puts too much responsibility on the individual woman, who is torn between her care for her child, her feeling for her husband, the opinion of Mrs. Jones next door, reports of people who have evacuated and come back, and her doubts about the reception she will get and whether she will see her husband again and so forth. If there is proper organisation, if people are told what is to happen to them, if the fathers are assured of hot meals and shelters underground for sleep (a problem which could be readily solved given large-scale evacuation, since there are good underground shelters in the tubes, under the wharfs, and in City basements) then the men to whom I talked told me that they would welcome the evacuation of their wives and families and would carry on indefinitely, as soldiers in the front line, having the comradeship and, in a sense, the freedom of soldiers looking after themselves with rations at the front. The women who were reluctant to go, or hesitant, would not mind either, if they were assured about their husbands' meals and so forth, and many without children would stay and work and be useful. And the men will be ready too if they know that evacuation means a good home for the family. I know, of course, the difficulties of evacuation. Billeting can only be used to a limited extent. But I notice in the *Times* long lists of comfortable houses outside London advertised to let and I know of immense places with scores of beds that could be at once commandeered as hostels.

An additional reason for doing this at once is that the danger of epidemics is already grave. Shelters which are now laboratories for the culture of germs can be fumigated and kept clean if the numbers using them are limited and the sick have been evacuated. Otherwise, diphtheria, rumoured in shelters, skin diseases already reported, cerebro-spinal fever already reported (in the medical papers) as increasing and, other diseases, are certain. An influenza plague is likely—the cycle for an epidemic comes this year in any case. I need not point to the danger of the growing lice population. Thousands of people now never undress for weeks together.

The Coming Winter

Finally the question of morale. Nothing too enthusiastic can be said for the extraordinary courage and good-humoured fortitude with which the mass of East Enders have borne their incredible ordeal. However severely the West End is hit, it cannot suffer as the East End does. When the East Ender loses his home he loses everything. His life's savings are in his furniture and his whole life bound up with that of the demolished streets. It is moving to see Union Jacks placed on demolished slums. "God Save the King" is placarded above one of the worst scenes of desolation in East London. I talked to a man in the ruined streets of Dockland who was waiting after five days for someone to come from the Council and tell him whether he could remain in his house, on which some of the roof was still standing, which had no gas or amenities or windows, but which was not actually flat. He was full of fun about it and more moving in his eagerness to stick to his job and his home, and his concern for his wife, than one or two broken figures I saw, standing in desolation looking at what had been their homes. But when all this and much more is said, there is a mood of anger about the lack of deep shelters, and this does not come from political agitation but from the facts. It is impossible to read Sir John Anderson's explanations for his refusal to provide deep shelters, without feeling that his personal pride has influenced his judgment. Every argument used by Sir John and the Hailey Committee is rebutted by the long queues formed up every afternoon for the privilege of sharing in the nightly squalor of the Tubes. Evacuation and deep shelters are human and urgent demands, reinforced by lack of a roof, lack of sleep, and lack of gas or heating. As the colder weather comes, they will become desperate demands if they are not at once satisfied. So far, these demands and the outrage of failure to deal with the homeless take no political tone and come from people irrespective of party. The Communist party is much discredited and the Fascists, as the most experienced resident I know said to me, have disappeared, "at least for the present." That they will come back in a threatening form, if winter sees these grievances unchanged, no one will doubt. Already Fascists are hard at work in the Tubes, reviving as far as they can, a race hatred that could die in the experience of common suffering. I asked a minister of religion, who knows Dockland possibly better than anyone else living and who sleeps every night in the shelters, on what lines political discussion is now running in East London. He replied that there was indignation against Anderson on account of shelters, bitter talk about Mr. Chamberlain and an urgent demand for some of the changes I have listed. He said there was beginning also to be awkward questioning about the war. He had been at some meeting of local leaders. Not one of them was willing to give away an inch to Hitler. They were all willing to stick it. But, they asked, how was it possible to go on like this? They passed resolutions demanding shelters and evacuation and proper treatment for the homeless, and they added a question as to whether it was not possible to make terms and to end the war without giving in to Hitler. In another month, if things go on like this, he said, that resolution " will have become a cry to stop the war." And not one of those who make it will want to give in to Hitler. If that happens it will be the fault of Sir John Anderson, the Minister of Health and the Local Authorities. KINGSLEY MARTIN

THE FORGOTTEN REFUGEES

A MONTH ago, before air raids monopolised attention, the public, the press and some M.P.s had just awakened to the scandal of our treatment of refugees. Important changes were promised. But newspaper space is scarce and Parliament rarely meets, and, with a relaxation of pressure on the authorities, the hopes of hapless internees are visibly waning. The rhythm of releases has slowed down, now that the more serious cases of sickness have been dealt with, and the new categories of release foreshadowed by Mr. Peake three weeks ago (and which, it was understood, were to provide for the release of students and a more rational treatment of would-be emigrants) have still not materialised. Few people realise that there are in Brixton Gaol now a large number of refugees, some of whom we know to be good friends of this country, who are kept in solitary confinement as criminals and even denied a razor or an extra blanket.

We have never caught up with the initial blunders. The tribunal system, doubtless well-intentioned, is now generally known to have been a failure, creating much injustice and providing very little security. Refugees with long political experience estimate that no more than 4 per cent. of the B category internees whom they found in the camps were really Nazi sympathisers, while they would put the percentage among the C category as high as ten. The Home Office, in fact, recognised months ago that the tribunals had done their work badly, but the process of revision was so slow that it had scarcely begun when the general internment policy was inaugurated in May. Even the few revisions that took place were made before the Advisory Committees knew that a B classification was soon to imply automatic internment, but these are none the less barred from further reconsideration.

The general internment policy created so many new problems that those who knew and understood what was happening at the tribunals had to abandon their criticisms; there was too much to be done in the way of exposing the inefficiencies and cruelties of the manner of arrest, the running of the camps, and so on. Even now the full story of this has not been told; as released internees tell of their experiences, it becomes clear that much criminal negligence (to make the kindest assumption) has gone unpunished. Here, for instance, is the story, fully vouched for, of a journey from Kempton Park to Douglas on June 10th to 11th. The internees were given breakfast at 4.30 a.m. and entrained at about 7.30, each man having received two slices of bread for the journey. No other refreshment, *not even water*, was provided until about 3 a.m. on the following day. Liverpool Station has taps with drinking water, but for some reason or other Grenadier Guards were posted to keep the internees from them. The crossing to the Isle of Man was rough, and the boat built for 300 passengers carried over 1,000 internees and guards. The internees, about half of whom were over fifty, were not allowed below decks, although it rained continuously. By 2 o'clock in the morning the older men were literally in a state of collapse, but it was only a threat of riot by the younger ones, themselves by now desperate with hunger and thirst, that produced some grudging cups of tea, slowly made and supplied only to those who could collect it in person. Other stories of this kind will doubtless swell the long list as time goes on, and yet this is the kind of War Office sadism that Sir John Anderson advises us to forget, now that his Department has taken charge.

And in fact we are forgetting. There are many matters of this kind, each pushing the earlier ones into the background. The story of the *Arandora Star* aroused a sense of alarm which would have been one of horror, if all the facts had been revealed immediately, instead of being elicited piecemeal. But does anyone now give a thought to those unfortunates, many of them bitterly anti-Nazi or anti-Fascist, who have seen their fathers or brothers or husbands, first classed as dangerous aliens or potential spies (sometimes through the ignorance of the Tribunal, and in one or two cases at least because personal spite was at work), and then drowned and left in death permanently labelled as friendly to the hated system that had driven them into poverty and exile? Dead men cannot appeal to Sir Norman Birkett's Committee, and so the stigma remains. To the rest of us, as we count the nightly bombs falling around us, this may seem very little, but it still means much to the relatives of these men that there is apparently no thought or hope of clearing their names.

Even where we have recognised mistakes, we have not learned from them. Sir Norman Birkett's Committee for the re-hearing of A category cases was able to consider no more than six or seven cases a day, fewer if it encountered really difficult problems. This is presumably known to Sir John Anderson, yet he has set up only one tribunal to hear applications for release under category 19 (the " political " category) of the second White Paper. Something like 3,000 applications under this category are expected, and many will involve consideration of writings, reports of speeches and records of political activities in Germany as well as of police records and private testimonies here. The reader can doubtless work out for himself how long it will take. The Government is to be asked to set up a number of these tribunals, and names of competent assessors have been submitted to it. Suggestions for large numbers of new release categories are also being submitted, and it is to be hoped that Parliamentary pressure will be added to that of the refugee organisations.

The most alarming thing is that along with these past mistakes the fundamental issue of the whole refugee problem is being forgotten. While refugee organisations are of necessity fully occupied in seeking either individual releases or the creation of new categories of release, nobody is left with time to question the justification of the policy of general internment itself. The *Jewish Chronicle* reproduces a letter from the Prime Minister to Mr. Nathan Laski, in which Mr. Churchill, while admitting that " a policy of wholesale internment must cause hardships, injustices and economic waste," " is afraid that there can be no question of releasing persons of enemy nationality merely because they have lived here a long time *or have shown no sign of disloyalty or lack of sympathy with the Allied cause*." The italics are ours. The implications of this letter take us to the root both of this and of a much wider problem. The internees are to remain in the camps, not because of their political views, but because of their nationality. The Government's attitude to refugees is thus a test of much more than its humanity and common sense; it is the test of its whole conception of why and against whom the war is being fought. Is the Labour Party, which shares the responsibilities of this Government, content to leave even that matter where it stands?

THE CATHOLIC-LATIN MYTH

A CAREFUL scrutiny of the Catholic press in this country since the downfall of France is highly instructive. The " line " may be summed up as a pathetic attempt to reconcile an attitude of faith, hope and charity with regard to the new France—which has broken with the pernicious Liberal, rationalist and secularist tenets of the Third Republic—with the patent fact that Marshal Pétain and company are entirely under Nazi domination.

The come-back of Catholicism in France in recent years has, indeed, been a remarkable phenomenon. To many Frenchmen whose sympathies remained broadly democratic it had seemed to be the one force which offered hope of better things in place of the utter rottenness of " politics." The influence of Jacques Maritain in one sphere —together with the new democratic Catholic publications like *Esprit*, *Temps Présent* and *L'Aube*—and, on the other hand, the steady progress of the Catholic trade union movement, appeared to be creating a Christian-Social leaven whereby the mass of ordinary Frenchmen might be weaned from " Communism " or some crypto-Fascist alternative. Cardinal Verdier, as long as he was alive, was an admirable bridge between democracy and the Church. At the same time, however, the hierarchy and the high-born who had not moved with the times—those elements of black reaction with which the Church is commonly associated—began to sit up and take notice and to provide for simple, soldierly souls like Pétain and Weygand the semi-mystical inspiration of " renewal through eclipse " which has brought the country to its present pass. Triumphant in Spain, the Jesuits, too, soon saw their chance to regain their authority in a France whose body politic was increasingly devitalised. Undoubtedly, such disinterested support as the Pétain regime had at the beginning came principally from those who had visions of a new kind of Catholic emancipation.

There was, for instance, that leading article in the *Osservatore Romano* of July 8th, which hailed the Vichy régime as " the dawn of a new radiant day, not only for France but for Europe and the world "—and the allusion to " this old octogenarian to whom the youth of the country look for revival." Such language may seem to us the merest irony. We should, perhaps, reflect that, even before Italy's intervention, continued bullyragging had forced the Vatican organ into an attitude of utter subservience to Signor Mussolini and his braves. Cardinal Hinsley, certainly, at once issued a disclaimer, and, through the " Sword of the Spirit " movement, with which Christopher Dawson and Barbara Ward are also associated, has been trying to save Catholicism here for democracy. But we have to recognise, I think, that Catholics everywhere are still haunted by the spectre of Communism, are still indoctrinated with the notion that the arch-enemy of Christian values is not Nazi Germany but atheist Russia. Thus you get the peculiar reasoning of a good democratic Catholic writer like Christopher Hollis (in an article in *The Spectator*) girding at the idea of an Anglo-Soviet *rapprochement*, that:

> It is the fear of the Vatican that the British, indifferent though not hostile to the survival of Christianity, will collect a team of rapscallions (*sic*) to defeat Hitler and then, contracting out of Europe as is their habit, will leave the unhappy Continent to the mercies of their allies.

It cannot have been very difficult, therefore, in the general *désarroi* in France last June for M. Laval and his clique to persuade Pétain and Weygand that " Communism " was only just round the corner and that only a " conservative " solution could save France in her hour of trial. M. Laval, with his Latin nations *bloc*, is concerned primarily, of course, with balance-of-power considerations: he visualises, that is to say, a Southern European and Mediterranean grouping of the Catholic Latin peoples—France, Italy and Spain (with the addition at some future date, perhaps, of a Rhineland and Bavarian State with their 30 million Catholics). But this is only a pale reflection of what a cluster of militant Catholic intellectuals have been dreaming of, and M. Baudouin and his friends, for example, are imbued with a genuine *mystique* relating to the bond of Christianity binding the Latin peoples.

Because of its anti-British flavour we in England have been prone to ignore that philosophy of history with a militant Catholic tinge which has developed in France in recent years, and which now seems to be coming into its own. Among the champions of Catholic and Mediterranean culture there is fervent zeal for the " defence of the Occident " against the corrosive influence of Bolshevism, etc., but they are no less fervently anti-British. M. Henri Massis's book with that title was one of the first salvos. Then there was the violent manifesto of the Right-wing intellectuals at the time of the Abyssinian war, upholding Italy's right to bring civilisation to a backward people, and raging against the British pressure for " sanctions." Since then, it is true, except for occasional hurrahs for the Christian General in Spain, they have not had much to say, but *Gringoire*, which published that amazing diatribe of Henri Béraud, against England has always been open to their rhetoric. Underlying the cult of Catholic and Mediterranean values is a smouldering resentment against Britain, as the cradle of the Reformation and, therefore, source of all the evils of parliamentary democracy and a disintegrating " liberalism " that have flowed from it. In Italy, too, of course, this has been a favourite theme of Fascist writers—though they cannot be said to have been very responsive to the advances of their French colleagues. It is in the Spain of General Franco, actually, that these doctrines have, so to speak, come to flower.

In that incredible book, *Que es lo nuevo?* published by Jose Pemartín early in 1938, the author devotes eight pages to an elaborate disquisition on Spain's rôle of leadership in the coming Latin union, on her especial task of impregnating with her lofty Christian spirit the future German Europe. " Christianity," we are told, " came upon the scene of history at a crucial period of time, which witnessed the intersection of three great cultures—when antiquity was drawing to a close, when Arab culture was coming into the ascendant and already the Faustian or Germanic epoch could be descried on the horizon." (The influence of Spengler is evident.) The corresponding element in space, says Señor Pemartín, is the Mediterranean—" the font in whose deep blue waters the world receives its sacrament of baptism." And it was to that same sea, the Mediterranean, that the blond German paladins made their pilgrimage to receive *their* baptism of Latinity. The result of this permeation of cultures was medieval Christianity. But then, at the close of the Middle Ages, Ichabod! this " Civilisation of the West " came to be denied by the next phase of history, " the apostasy of Europe " which set in with the Reformation. Now, however, that era has run its course. The time is ripe for a new Catholicisation of Europe. (*Y se impone una nueva catolización de Europa.*) Thus, in this Spaniard's simple conception of history as the working of divine Providence, it is ordained that the Mediterranean should once more be made ready for a second immersion of the blond German pagans in its purifying waters. A new medieval era is upon us. It is characterised by the formidable expansionist impetus of Germany, of the Reich—on the one hand to sweep back to the frontiers of Asia the Mongol and Muscovy hordes that have spilled over, drawing irresistible strength for this enterprise, like Antaeus, from renewed contact with the earth of the fertile Ukraine lands (*sic*) and, on the other hand, to fulfil her destiny by the conquest of Europe as a whole, rebuilding the realm of the Roman Empire. The appointed task of that empire of Rome—Italy, Spain, Portugal—and France, after conversion, is to safeguard the Mediterranean shores for the great christening. And, on the ruins of apostate Europe, the Latin union will contrive to spiritualise the German cult of power so that a " Civilisation of the West " is reborn. . . .

There is a lot more in that vein. Señor Pemartín graciously concedes, for instance, that in this process of Catholicisation of the modern world the British Empire in its manifest decadence will fill much the same rôle as the Roman Empire did in the process of Christianisation of the world of antiquity. For Spanish America he holds out the prospect of converting the North of that Continent to Catholicism. Finally, he has a passage about the Christian nations banding themselves together against the Yellow Peril.

It is all fantastic and hyperbolic twaddle—the Southern counterpart of the Nazis' Nordic nonsense. But at the core there is, as in the inspiration of Pétain's France, a hankering after a sort of Counter-Reformation, which will destroy the last vestiges of British influence on the Continent. We have been warned.

W. HORSFALL CARTER

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Douglas Smith.

All cuttings should be addressed to " This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

WAR IN HEAVEN
MICHAEL AND HIS ARMY
FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Therefore these mystic beings of the unseen spiritual world sympathise with us more fully, and will give whatever aid is permitted more readily, because they too have freewill, because they too have known war in heaven, and the cost of the moral struggle with evil.—*Times.*

General Franco is the last man to be hustled into an anti-British policy. —Military Correspondent in the *Daily Sketch.*

We gaily careered down Oxford and Regent Street, and chic women on the bus got a close-up of the havoc wrought to certain famous feminine emporims. Nothing has brought home to women who " dress," more realistically than these gaunt ruins of autum-sale rendezvous the frightfulness of the " Blitzkrieg."—*Eastern Daily Press.*

SINGULARITY

THE Nazi evil is our datum,
Its downfall our desideratum,
Its extirpation our agendum,
Without erratum or addendum,
And this our only memorandum,
" Make victory our propagandum."

SAGITTARIUS

ON BEING A BORE

" DON'T become a bomb-bore "—so the *Sunday Express* counsels its readers and it suggests that, though people are interested in their own bombs, they are merely bored by other people's bombs. I confess I am still unsophisticated enough to find my friends' bombs interesting and sometimes even exciting. If I am told of a friend's having been bombed out of his house, I feel no desire to change the subject to the abandonment of racing at Newmarket. Bombs are still too much of a novelty to be dull. Besides, they are highly dangerous. Their explosions are also incidents in what may well be the most important battle in the world's history.

There are, I agree, people who can make talk about bombs intensely boring. They are the people who can talk about nothing else—people who seem to find comfort in spreading gruesome stories of destruction, most of them unfounded. Here, I think, however, it is not the subject, but the person that is boring. The bore of wartime is merely the bore of peacetime with a different story to tell. The man who cannot make his bomb interesting, it seems to me, must be a poor narrator.

There are, of course, some people who are bored by almost any conversation. They are bored if you talk shop; they are bored if you talk golf; they are bored if you talk politics. It is men of this kind who complain about talkative barbers and who loathe strangers who try to enter into conversation with them in railway trains. There is a story told of a rich American whom a friend saw one day buying a dollar watch in a great railway station—I think it was at New York. "What are you doing that for?" said the friend; "haven't you got a watch?" "I have," said the rich man; "this is for the train bore. Don't you realise that on every train there is a bore and that, almost as soon as you have started on the first day's journey, he comes and sits beside you in the observation car and tries to get into talk with you by asking you what time it is? Well, I always carry one of these watches with me, and when the train bore comes and sits down beside me and asks me for the time, I take it out, look at it, and tell him 'Half past two,' or whatever time it is and, making faces like a lunatic, fling the watch out of the train. That settles him. Of course, he thinks I'm mad and slinks off without waiting to say 'Thank you' and tells the other passengers. After that I can travel in peace right across the Continent. I have never known it to fail, and it's cheap at the price."

This dislike of conversation with strangers is for me hard to understand. I think I should even enjoy an occasional half-hour with the train bore. Up to a point I like bores. I like overhearing golf bores asking each other whether they know the seventh hole at Wookey and the bunker before the eleventh hole at Stookey. Many bores are so obviously happy that it is a pleasure to watch them. Think of all those motoring bores who not so many years ago, when cars and road-surfaces were not so good, used to talk for hours of the hills they had been up and down. It was all "Did it in top," "It's one in four, isn't it?" and "It was so steep we had to turn the car and go up it in reverse." Beggar's Roost and Countisbury were godsends to them. You might have imagined from listening to them that they were heroes out of Homer narrating immortal exploits. How boring it would all have been if it had been put down in print. Yet of the motoring bore it might have been said: The greater the bore, the greater the beatitude.

The worst bores, I sometimes think, are those who love telling people the various routes from one place to another. I have never been more bored in my life than when listening to an old gentleman explaining to an old lady the several ways in which she might have come from Notting Hill Gate to Hampstead. She had complained of the time the journey had taken and immediately he was off on a long rigmarole consisting of the numbers of buses and the names of streets and stations. He went on in a flat voice conducting her, as it seemed to me, through every street in west and north London. He told her of all the various places where she might have changed buses and named most of the public houses on the way. In the end, it seemed to me, he was boring himself as well as the rest of us; but he dared not stop, I fancy, because he could think of nothing else to talk about. By the time he rose to go I was in a coma with words like Camden High Street, Prince of Wales Road and Britannia jostling each other in my brain.

Another boring form of conversation is that of the man who, when talking politics, trots out all the old threadbare arguments with the air of a person using them for the first time. I have been a bore of this kind myself. As a boy I was blind enough to regard Mr. Gladstone's proposal of Home Rule for Ireland as both dangerous and wicked, and, whenever I met a great friend of mine who was a Home Ruler, I would drag the conversation round to the great theme. I shouted the wildest nonsense into his ear as I walked beside him in the streets, telling him with blazing eyes of all the good England had done to Ireland and yelling all the usual musty quotations from the pre-Home-Rule Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt. Not once did I use an original argument, for I knew none. I was merely an infuriated parrot, speaking out of the richest store of ignorance conceivable. Signs of distress on his patient face could not stop me; but one day, driven beyond endurance, he turned to me with a slight flush and said quietly: "My God, what a bore you are!" Now no one likes to be thought a bore, and it is difficult to go on arguing with a man who tells you that you are boring him. To realise that one is boring somebody is to become a pricked balloon. I certainly did. La Rochefoucauld tells us that "we can forgive those who bore us, but we cannot forgive those whom we bore," yet, after the first moment of shock, I never liked my friend the less for his candour. Since then I must have bored many people; but outside the family circle no one has since told me that I was boring them. I have to study the expression on their faces to know.

On the other hand, there are certain circumstances in which the sin of being bored is at least as great as the sin of boring. I have no doubt that many of the Athenians thought Socrates a bore. I have often heard a brilliant conversationalist of our own time described as "such a bore." In the world of music we find some people who are bored by Bach, and others who are bored by crooning. I have met people who were bored by a day at Ascot, and others who declared proudly that they had never been so bored in their lives as at the gaming tables at Monte Carlo. That is the worst feature of being bored; it makes men boastful. No one ever boasts of being a bore, but many people boast of being bored by historic churches or the novels of Dickens or sport. If a man tells you that Rugby football bores him, be sure that, in nine cases out of ten, he feels your superior at the moment of his confession. The blasé young men of the 'Nineties were vain of their boredom with life in general. It was what set them apart from and above their fellows.

There are certain people, however, with whom one has a right to be bored—people who are so self-centred that they cannot listen to anyone else talking, people who engage in long conversations with their cats when visitors are present, people who exchange endless reminiscences of their old school when in the company of a man who was at a different school. Such people are boring because they make one feel for the time being an outsider.

When we meet on common ground, however, and indulge in a give-and-take of experiences that we have all shared, there is no excuse for drooping spirits. In the last war the food shortage was a lively if monotonous subject, for we were all victims of it. In the present war air raids are the great theme of talk, and it may be that people endure them all the better for having a friendly ear to which to impart their experiences and thoughts. To talk about them all the time would be insufferable; but five minutes' talk about them now and then is a natural piece of self-indulgence. I would rather talk about Canada or birds or old watches—but if any man has a story to tell of a fairly narrow escape from a falling bomb I will promise neither to think him nor to call him a bore.

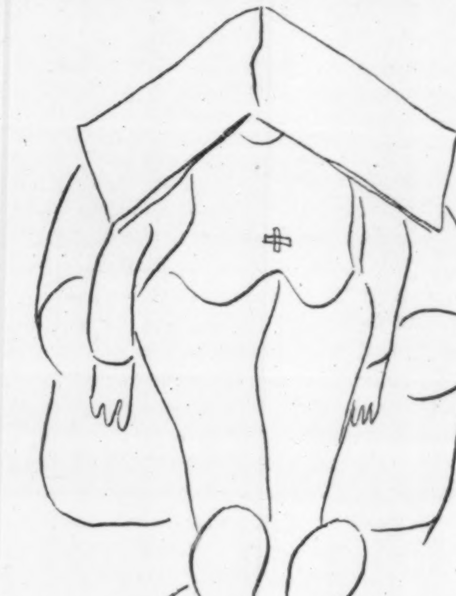
Y. Y.

THE RITZKRIEG PAPERS

[The following extracts are taken from a forthcoming book, *The Ritzkrieg Papers*, edited by Michael Barsley.] *The Ritzkrieg Papers*, or the Anti-Red, White and True-Blue Book of the English Old Guard are, he says, of the utmost significance, providing as they do the clue, or missing Link, to the peculiar behaviour of the Guilt-edged Men and Gilded Women of English society.

The MSS., found at High Dudgeon, home of Lady Standaghast, were marked "Secret and Privately Entrusted," the collection bore the address "Canon Fodder, Armstrong Vicarage, Tithehurst," evidently its next place of call, as it would seem that the documents were smuggled, in highly dramatic fashion, from country house to country house.

(It is well known that the Canon holds Moral Rearmament shares.)



Canon Fodder at Crockford's Club.

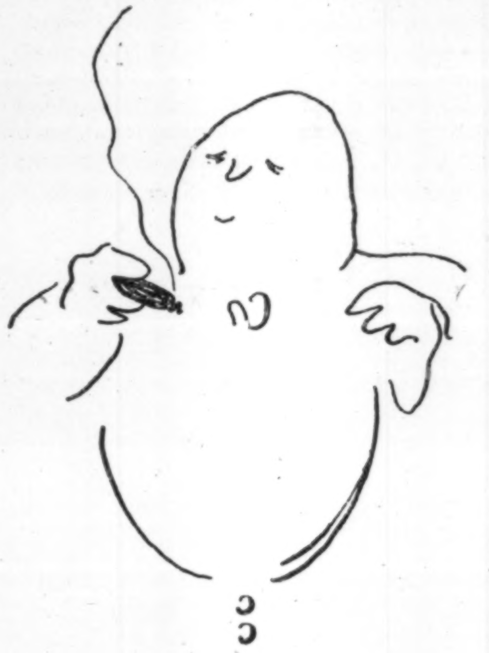
With the publication of *The Ritzkrieg Papers*, the Old Guards' Plan of Inaction and Reaction will stand revealed. The Ritzkrieg motto of "What You Have We Hold" will be seen to be no mere idle boast. A definite Plan of Champagne must have been slowly maturing through the years, to culminate in an attempt to turn the present struggle into stale-mate, followed by Stalin-mate—or failing that, to turn the People's War into the Best People's War. The first step was to be the white-collaring of all the best Whitehall jobs. The last, to be the continuation of the aristocratic regime without the alteration of one jot or title. It was, in effect, a private war fought by private means.

That the Ritzkrieg failed—if indeed it has failed—is no reason for not exposing it at the present time. The Guilt-edged Men have at last been brought to book, and an amazing book it is. Some of the protagonists of the Ritzkrieg have already found sanctuary in the U.S.A., but from now on, watch will be strict on those who still remain—Canon Fodder, preacher of the Ritzcreed, Major Garrison-Harrison, L.D.V., the Standaghasts, Major Powet, writer of Versatz, Lord Woolsack, Lord Bottleneck of the Min. of Infamy, Katherine Lady Kensington ("Kitty" of "Home Cat"), and last but not least, Colonel Bogus, shady counterpart of Colonel Blimp.

COLONEL BLIMP AND COLONEL BOGUS

It cannot be too strongly stressed—although perusal of *The Ritzkrieg Papers* will make it abundantly clear—that there are two distinct types of Old Guard. In the present writer's opinion, these are best represented by those two formidable characters, Colonel Blimp and Colonel Bogus.

Colonel Blimp will need little or no introduction to readers. Hard riding, hard drinking, hard of hearing, this old warrior of the Blimperialist School first won fame in the LOW Countries and has been immortalised in the deathless pages of the Oxford Dictionary. Blimp has always been a sentimentalist and an idealist. For him the only type of gentleman was Gad's Englishman—and he believed in Gad. For him life meant adherence to a simple code which was nevertheless difficult to decode. For him, society was like his London club—above suspicion but damned difficult to get into. And yet no one would claim that the Blimperialists had any grasp of the contemporary situation; the only grasp they knew was the firm hand on the reigns when the scent was strong and hounds were in good fettle. As the poet said, "*The rolling English country made the ruling English rude.*" Science and Progress, however, would shortly have made them superfluous as well. Like the old soldiers they were, the Blimps would simply have faded away.



COLONEL BOGUS.
One of the Guilt-edged men.

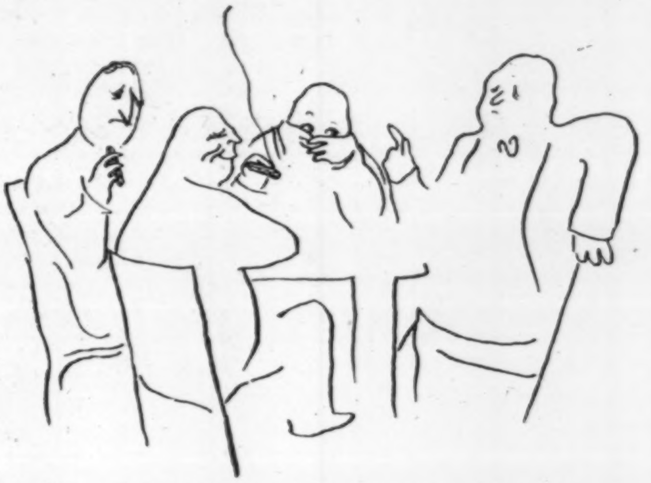
But the Blimperial tradition acquired new blood. And here Colonel Bogus appears on the scene.

The new Colonel has been described (Ritz. MS. XV 314) as "a modest but influential figure in business and sporting life." He is of the type which formed an alliance between the Nouveau Riche and the Nouveau Reich. Colonel Blimp is associated with officers; Colonel Bogus with offices (though he is described in the Ritzkrieg as "A Shire-Pusher as well as a Share-Pusher"). Blimp talked of a "Gentleman's Agreement." Bogus refers not infrequently to a "Businessman's Agreement"; he is well known as a good hand at the game of war-contract bridge.

Well known in City circles, vicious circles, Vichy circles, etc., Colonel Basil Bogus is of vague and indeterminate position. He has always been plain "Colonel Bogus," and the general public is not morbidly attracted to mystery men unless they have titles. This very vagueness greatly strengthened the Bogus position ("People never find you out if you are never in"—*Maxims of Bogus, XXXVII*). His origins were obscure, but never held against him. His claim to the rank of Colonel was never proved, but never challenged. He was a "Courtesy Col." His entry in "Who's What" reveals little, unless "Recreation: foreign travel" is a clue.

And yet, who will deny that it was Colonel Bogus rather than Colonel Blimp who was the true representative of the Guilt-edged Men, who helped to prepare the Appeasement of yesterday and the Jappeasement of to-day?

The question remains: how had Colonel Bogus rushed in where Anglos feared to tread? What was the secret of his power?



A NICE GAME OF WAR-CONTRACT BRIDGE.

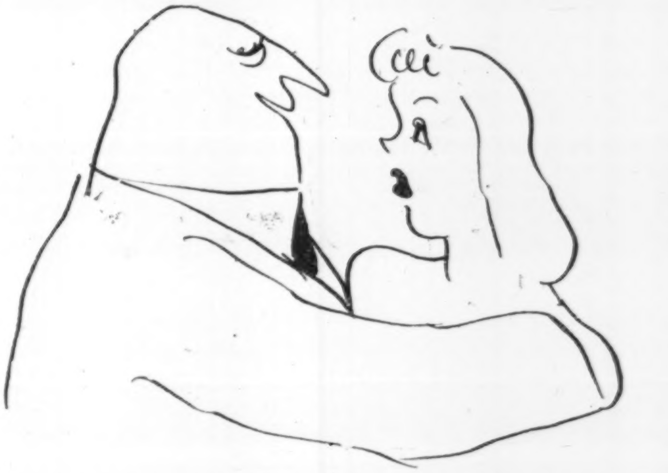
The Ritzkrieg Papers make frequent references to the *sterling* qualities of Colonel Bogus. "Once put Bogus on his metal, and he is irresistible." And in this way, evidently, the tradition that membership of the Blimpish Clubs could not be bought or bartered away might not be broken—but it was gently waived. And indeed, without the odour of sanctity that hangs around the tweeds of the Harristocracy, Colonel Bogus might well have gone the way of many a defaulting business man. But by becoming a jolly country squire in his spare moments, with a bluff attitude which concealed an attitude of bluff, he made a country camouflage his best protector.

> One does not look for a business man in a barnyard (*Maxims of Bogus* XIX, ii).

Another excellent standby was the Bogus patriotism, his very generous gifts of comfits, misfits, etc., for the troops, his occasional détours and half-day tours with the local L.D.V., his presentation of a bakelite flapjack to every débutante in the A.T.S. who received promotion within a month—that is, to every debutante in the A.T.S. For, as the master hand has written:

> A Profiteer is not without honour saving his own country (Ibid, IV).

Blimp, we feel sure, would have been incapable of stooping to such deception or rising to such heights of eloquence. Short of speech, short of temper, short of wind, and short of cash, Blimp fell an easy (if uneasy) prey to the wiles of his subtler and more unscrupulous colleague. And in return, as the secret documents of the Ritzkrieg reveal, many of the Old Guard were given spare directorships which happened to be available for disposal. A Board in the hand is worth two in Bush House.



"COLONEL BOGUS WAS NOT ALWAYS ENTIRELY A GENTLEMAN . . ."

Blimp and Bogus are at one in regarding the great enemy as being Bolshevism, Unshavism, etc. They are both firm believers in the Upper Ten Commandments, though Bogus adheres to this Upper-Decalogue more as a matter of form than out of any previous convictions. But in one more human aspect they differ profoundly: in their attitude to women. Blimp has surely always maintained the same bearing towards the ladies as towards his favourite horses. It is an attitude of chivalry (derived from *chevalerie*). Colonel Bogus, on the other hand, is not always entirely a gentleman. Where Colonel Blimp is upstage, Colonel Bogus is backstage. . . .

We hope that on a future occasion we shall be able to divulge Lord Bottleneck's *Secret Instructions* for the tightening-up of "Noose" and Propaganda, and other diverting extracts from *The Ritzkrieg Papers.*

MICHAEL BARSLEY

BALLADE OF THE CHEESES OF YORE

THE Cheddar cheese upon my plate
Knew not the gorge that reared its sire,
Dorset Blue Vinney's out of date,
And Petit Suisse a vain desire;
In some remote Norwegian byre
The brown goat-cheese they still prepare,
And yet unanswered I inquire:
Où sont les fromages de mon père?

Let no defeatist underrate
The cheeses of our great Empire,
Canadian cows I'll celebrate
And toast their cheese before the fire
If but Bel Paese bless my lyre,
Rich Pommel and renowned Gruyère,
And Fontainebleau my Muse inspire—
Où sont les fromages de mon père?

Stilton! When peril threats the State
England hath need of thee. We tire
Of lesser cheeses that of late
Usurp the grocer's scales and wire;
Rise Rochefort, terrible in ire!
Up Gorgonzola, Camembert!
God and St. Ivel, knight and squire—
Où sont les fromages de mon père?

Envoi

Führer! Caerphilly shall conspire,
Brie, Wensleydale shall hear our prayer,
The Dutch have joined the Angel Choir—
A nous, les fromages de mon père!

REGINALD REYNOLDS

ADOLESCENT ART

SOME little time ago I visited an exhibition of children's art at the St. Martin's School in London. Thanks largely to intelligent arrangement it threw light on the important and fascinating question: What happens to human beings, in so far as human beings are creatures who express themselves naturally in form and colour, in those critical years which lie between thirteen and eighteen? Also it raised a question more important still, maybe: To what extent can the visual arts be used as an instrument of education in the fullest sense of the word? Clearly, in any attempt to answer such questions the role of the art critic must be a modest one. I hope that psychologists and educators have also visited this exhibition, meditated what they are shown, and will in due course favour us with their inferences.

About little children's paintings we know a good deal. We realise that these charming productions are the result of day-dreaming brush in hand. For children the creatures of their imagination are as real as objects in what is called external reality; and, in any case, they lack skill to render appearances. But they are not concerned with appearance; like savages they are concerned with concepts. Their art is conceptual: that is to say, they try to render their notions of things and not what they see. Note the exaggeration of the eye, the mouth, the hand in representations of human beings by babies and savages. They put the accent on what concerns them most. So much we understand: what we do not understand is why these little savages devise quite naturally combinations of line and colour, shapes and patterns, of enchanting prettiness, immeasurably superior to anything they are likely to admire in later life. Something happens to them between the ages of twelve and eighteen. What happens? Psychologists must explain; but to explain they must have data: data can be supplied only by exhibitions.

So much for the question illuminated. The question raised is one that concerns us all—indeed it touches the whole future of civilisation—but it is chiefly for the teachers of art in the public and secondary schools to discover the answer. Can the teaching of visual art become an instrument of culture? Can it so develop latent powers of understanding as to enable human beings to get more and better out of life? Can it do that which for ages the teaching of literature has been supposed to do? For we are taught, or are supposed to be taught, to write and to appreciate English—to express ourselves in language and to appreciate the masterpieces of expression. Some of us were taught, or at least our parents paid for us to be taught, to write and to appreciate Latin and Greek. We are deemed the better for it, and I believe I am. If we learnt to paint and draw, to express ourselves in line and colour, and to appreciate painting and drawing, should we not be the better for that? And if it is decided that we should be, how are we to set about it?

Teachers must realise, though I know the thought is unpleasant, that out of a thousand pupils it is unlikely that more than one will possess such talent as would justify him in devoting his life to art. The question then arises whether the education which would suit the nine hundred and ninety-nine who are to use art as a means to life-enhancement is the same as that which would suit an adolescent sufficiently gifted to have legitimate hopes of becoming a professional. So far as I can see—which is not very far—it would.

Adolescence is the age of imitation, and by all means let the pupil imitate. Let him copy natural objects and let him copy works of art—but not casts. In reviewing these copies the teacher will have something positive to criticise; he can point out that the student has not rendered accurately the facts of a head, that he has not made the nose project beyond the eyes; he can demonstrate that a copy has not caught the character of the original: whereas of a work of pure imagination, a child's day-dream for instance, he can say only that it is or isn't very pretty. There can be no objection to students imitating the master they admire—be that master Michelangelo or Matisse: they enjoy themselves, and give their teachers an opportunity of pointing out the respects in which the copy differs from the copied. Danger begins only when the master encourages the pupil to believe that because he copies cleverly he is an artist. I remember a young milkman who could imitate the drawings of Michelangelo so dexterously that Sir Sidney Colvin hailed him as a great draughtsman; and I remember with pleasure how rudely I contradicted Sir Sidney. Probably the genial milkman has been back on his round these thirty years, and I doubt whether he is now the better for his acquaintance with Michelangelo. If an education in visual art is to be a means to culture, something more than dexterity must be cultivated.

Perhaps the most useful thing an art-master can teach his pupils is to use their eyes. Often I am astonished to discover how generally that faculty has been lost. Yet it is certain that in the past—in Italy, say, during the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance—many people lived what—to use a pompous but conveniently comprehensive term—one may call their "spiritual lives" almost entirely by their eyes. Now we see without looking: just as the unmusical person hears without listening. People enjoy the flower-beds in the park because from them they catch a whiff of splendour at a glance; but they cannot go on peering and prying till they have released from a picture all the potential happiness and exaltation it holds in suspense. If teachers can empower their pupils to extract from the visual arts all that is not to be had for mere seeing, clearly they can enrich life beyond measure.

How is it to be done? I might reply that, since I am not a teacher, that is none of my business. I shall, however, venture two suggestions. The first is a commonplace: put students in the way of seeing works of art, or photographs of works of art, and help them to seek out qualities more subtle than the obvious attractions of likeness and anecdote. Encourage them to appreciate and to criticise. For my second suggestion I found some excuse in that exhibition: it is—train visual memory. Some of the drawings there appeared to have been made from memory; and they did not all convince me that the pupil had learnt to look. For that rare creature who is going to be an artist such training is clearly of the greatest importance; and as a means to culture it is valuable too. No one can remember what a thing really looks like until he has really looked at it. So, invite your adolescents to draw from memory the house opposite, the end of his street, a cat, a dog or an omnibus seen full face. Possibly you will be surprised to discover how few of them have looked at what they see every day. Yet only to those who possess naturally or have acquired this power of looking will visual art give all it has to give.

CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"The Mortal Storm," at the Empire. "Turnabout," at the Paramount.

If I say that *The Mortal Storm* is an anti-Nazi film, even the best anti-Nazi film there has been since *Professor Mamlock*, that may in itself put people in two minds about going. Any dramatic reconstruction of the Terror in Germany is likely to touch us unbearably like the scene of Gloucester's blinding in *Lear*; and perhaps *The Mortal Storm*, made in America, is better suited to American than to English feelings at the moment. But this film of Borzage's is so moving, and shows so realistic an understanding of the growth of the Nazi "new world," that I recommend all except twitterers to go at once and see it. For eighty minutes it succeeds in making an air raid or two seem irrelevant. Borzage has chosen the simplest means of making his theme dramatic, and with the temptation to underline he has shown restraint. There are no massed bands, no Reichstag burnings, no Führer's progress or gathering armies. We are taken into the home of a professor of science in a Bavarian university town in 1933. A delightful picture of cosy routine and unpretentious happiness is built up by methods which recall, ironically enough, the heyday of the German silent film. There is the Professor himself (Frank Morgan) neglecting his breakfast, trotting off through snowy streets, acknowledging friendly salutes, arriving at the university to be reminded by the old servant to take off his goloshes before going into the lecture room. The family gather for the Professor's sixtieth birthday: his wife and sons, a daughter, two other young men in love with her. After dinner they turn on the wireless to hear that Adolf Hitler has been elected chancellor: from that moment, grasped at eagerly by some, pooh-poohed uneasily by others, the family begins to break apart. There is an argument between the daughter's two lovers, one a pacifist, the other a rigid party man, which comes near to blows; but the clash dies down. Then, gradually, gently almost, we see the poison beginning to spread; uniforms and patriotic choruses and outstretched arms let in the bully, there is an incident at a restaurant when an old man refuses to join in singing a Nazi song; he is beaten up by half a dozen uniformed youths as he leaves the building. By this time all the young men of the earlier scenes are in uniform, the Professor's sons, his students (they ban his lectures because he upholds scientific views about the Aryan blood-test)—all except the pacifist (James Stewart), who has become a hunted man. The skill with which Borzage insinuates the change from bounding patriotism to organised spying and murder is admirable; the open youthful faces are shaded by peaked caps, the cold eyes hidden; with each step towards worse calamity he takes us to the edge of what is bearable, and yet restraint holds a balance. The Professor is arrested (scene of the old servant from the university bringing home his coat and hat); we are given a glimpse, milder than we had expected, of the concentration camp, where his wife goes to visit him; later, abruptly, comes the news that he has died "of a heart attack." *The Mortal Storm* gives a plain enough picture of Nazi terror as it grows and fastens on one small corner of living, but by holding his hand at the right moment the director has made a film which it is possible to contemplate without being dazed by horrors. To the last minute, when the pacifist and the Professor's daughter escape together over the mountains into Austria (she is shot down as they cross the border), the spectator is moved by that pity for humanity which the Nazis so much despise. The climax even includes a few ski-ing thrills without being false. We owe the achievement of this film to Frank Borzage's tact and understanding of his material; nothing could be further from rant or hasty propaganda; and he has used his actors—Frank Morgan, Marie Ouspenskaya and James Stewart, especially—with an insistence on the subtleties of acting rare in films. Margaret Sullavan seemed to me at times a shade less effective than the others, but hers, too, was a good performance. The Empire, by the way, was packed and on this occasion deserved to be.

There is not a great deal to be said about *Turnabout* except that it is funny but ought to be a little funnier. It is very funny at the beginning with Adolphe Menjou posing models in an advertising office. But then comes the big idea of the film. Carole Landis and John Hubbard, tempestuously married, wish they could change places, and the wish is granted. Each retains only a mind and voice. He (now she) climbs wireless poles and upsets a wives' bridge-four; she (now he) minces her way to the office and causes Adolphe Menjou to swallow a glass of paraffin in mistake for a cocktail. It should be devastating. It should be rather naughty, but isn't. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, October 5th—

Fabian Society Meeting. Prof. H. J. Laski: "The need for a European Revolution," Central Hall, 2.15. Tickets from 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1. (Whi. 3077).

Manchester Civil Liberties Conference, Milton Hall, Deansgate, Manchester, 2.30. Speaker: The Dean of Canterbury.

Prof. J. B. S. Haldane: "The Recent Soviet Conference on Genetics," Caxton Hall, 2.30.

SUNDAY, October 6th—

Prof. G. W. Keeton: "The Struggle With Napoleon," Conway Hall, 11.

THURSDAY, October 10th—

China Campaign Committee Lunch. Speakers include H.E. the Chinese Ambassador and those from parts of the Empire who support China's struggle for independence, Ley On's Restaurant, 91, Wardour Street, W.1. Tickets 2*s*. 6*d*. from 34 Victoria Street, S.W.1.

Correspondence

"INTERNEES"

SIR,—During last month the Home Office announced a reversal in the policy of wholesale internment of aliens. A White Paper listing categories of internees who could claim release was published, and some of the more immediately unjust decisions were reversed. But there is one category of internee who is not catered for and who will never be catered for under any series of qualifications which demand proof of outstanding ability or activity. They are the ordinary harmless, though usually fundamentally anti-Nazi group.

My wife employed one of such people. A girl of Czech nationality who, being born in Vienna, came here with an Austrian passport, though Czech was her only language until she was eight years of age, and whose whole outlook is a sturdy blend of Czech nationalism and Viennese working-class hostility to Prussians and therefore to Nazis. She was swept into the net when the mesh was at its finest. Once inside it seems almost impossible to secure release, incarceration being nine points of the law.

What provision are the Home Office and the Advisory Committee going to make for such ordinary staunch and friendly allies?

GEORGE W. CADBURY.

Primrose Hill,
Selly Oak, Birmingham.

SIR,—In view of the fact that many "enemy aliens" have rightly been released either because they were distinguished academically or by reason of their being a great help to the national cause, it appears absurd to think that no provision whatsoever has been made for the release of internees who have lived in this country for upwards of forty years or more. If technically they must be aliens, there can be no grounds for treating them as "enemy" aliens.

Many of these immigrants found a haven in this country at a time when in its spaciousness it delighted in providing shelter for those in need. Many of these persons are now prominent leaders in British life. Many of their sons are fighting in our Services, but because some were either too poor or at that time too ignorant to obtain naturalisation, they are placed in internment camps. Surely the July White Paper might have covered this category and saved a considerable amount of unnecessary labour!

At the moment, applications are being made to the Home Office for their release. The Home Office replies to say that the matter has been considered but unfortunately release is impossible.

When the matter is considered in the light of common sense by those who dictate the policy for internees, these subjects will be included in a category for release and the whole rigmarole will start over again.

Let us hope that once and for all a comprehensive policy may be given which will release those who are so busily engaged in carrying out the work entailed by these internment camps so that they may really get down to the question of Fifth Column activity and free those whose families, espousing our common cause, are in a state of perpetual anxiety as to their well-being.

Survey House, DENNIS L. SANDELSON
15 Bond Street, Leeds, 1.

SIR,—Your correspondent Max Breslauer presses for the release of neurotic interned refugees from the camp at Douglas "before the rains come"—otherwise their health will suffer from their confinement "in the dining-rooms of their 34 houses."

May I inquire:

(1) How their health will stand up to numerous daylight raids and to nightly dusk-to-dawn confinement in packed shelters under heavy bombardment?

(2) How the health of the other crowded users of these shelters will stand up to a yet bigger incursion of panic-stricken aliens into their midst?

Apart from the space problem (and I must reluctantly admit that the average "friendly" alien seems to need a lot more shelter—"Lebensraum" than the average Londoner) one of the major difficulties of some London public shelters is the throng of neurotic foreign refugees who spend their lives, apparently, in an hysterical quest for 100 per cent. safety at night.

The truth is that we face something a lot worse than a rainy season, and that in the unpleasant circumstances Mr. Breslauer's friends might do a lot worse than Stay Put. My own reaction to his letter was, oh! for the dining-rooms of 34 safe houses to house some of our homeless thousands, and, oh! for a paper sincere enough, and unsentimental enough, and unhypocritical enough to say, that the worst our Government did to aliens was better than the best it is doing for our own.

SHELTER MARSHAL

RUBY GRIERSON

SIR,—The name of Ruby Grierson did not appear in any list of survivors from the torpedoed child-evacuee ship *City of Benares* in which she was sailing on film work to Canada and back. At the time of writing twelve days have lapsed since the disaster and there is now slender hope that she may have been picked up by a ship without wireless. A sister of the well-known John Grierson, pioneer of the British documentary film group, Miss Grierson gave up a successful teaching career in Scotland and came to London five years ago to work on films. Her remarkable ability for handling and understanding people, especially those whom some call "working class," showed itself in many documentary films of the "social" kind. In most cases, when perhaps her name did not appear on the screen, she was to be credited with the human quality of the film, notably in the now-famous *Housing Problems*. On the day when news was received that she was missing, London newspapers carried friendly reviews of the three films about food which she had just completed. Her warmness of feeling and intense devotion to the ideals for which some of the documentary film people stand will be profoundly missed in a movement which has already suffered disruption since the war began. Her kind of loyalty and influence went far beyond the mere task of film-making; it permeated the whole movement of which she was such a dignified and valuable member. A COLLEAGUE

[Among the other unhappy victims on the *Benares* were Mr. and Mrs. Rudolf Olden. Rudolf Olden, once political editor of the Liberal *Berliner Tageblatt*, was interned here during the recent outbreak of idiocy and only released to fill a post in the U.S.A.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

TROGLODYTE ARCHITECTURE

SIR,—The interesting review in your issue of September 21 on *The Rebuilding of London After the Great Fire*, by J. F. Reddaway, has led me to wonder whether Sir Christopher Wren and his fellow architects would have put pencil to paper had they felt sure that in a few years there would be another Great Fire. Are we to invite Sir Edwin Lutyens and other distinguished architects to set to work to design new buildings and plan new streets for the extensive areas of London which will be in ruins at the end of this war? Surely we know that whatever may be decided when the war is concluded, our present rulers will certainly not propose disarmament. On the contrary the successes of our Air Force, which are likely to continue to be established, will induce them further to strengthen our air arm and take advantage of every new device which may be invented in order to give us (of course for Defence) a more powerful air force, which must surpass in numbers and quality that of any other nation. In fact another war is a practical certainty not many years hence. Discussions on rebuilding London therefore are quite beside the mark, unless they are confined to planning new homes, offices, churches, chapels, shops, factories, libraries and museums *underground*. This will give a chance for originality; and we might have some parks above-ground as a setting for the few buildings which still remain.

Knowing full well how this desecration of the life of man might be avoided, I am glad I shall not live long enough to witness his return to the habits of his troglodyte ancestors. PONSONBY

Shulbrede Priory,
Haslemere.

THE DEFENSIVE

A REPLY

SIR,—I missed your issue of September 7th and thus have only just seen the letter signed "A. Rhinoceros." That letter is a noteworthy example of how, to serve the purposes of controversy, a carefully expressed conclusion can be distorted by omitting essential parts of it.

A basic conclusion expressed in my pre-war book, *The Defence of Britain*, was that to give the offensive an adequate prospect of success, the side which attempted it would need a superiority over the defence of about 3 to 1—that ratio being reckoned not in mere numbers of men, but in terms of modern "power units." I defined these as being constituted by mobile artillery, tanks and aircraft. As a precaution against any misunderstanding, I reiterated and amplified the point in each of the first five chapters. I also stressed two important reservations. The first was that a smaller ratio of superiority would suffice "where the ratio of space to density allowed such room for manoeuvre that the attacker could . . . bring, and maintain, a threat to the defender's rear." The second was that the defending army could only be expected to hold its own against superior ground forces "so long as it has sufficient machines to hold its own in the air."

A. Rhinoceros does not seem to realise that the Germans, when they took the offensive in May, fulfilled, with a margin to spare, these suggested conditions of a successful offensive. According to authoritative statements in the *Times*, they had fully a 4 to 1 superiority in aircraft and tanks. Moreover, by directing their attack initially against the Low Countries, they not only lured the Franco-British forces out of their defences, but extended the front of operations from approximately 200 miles (half of which was barred by the Rhine) to 500 miles—thus obtaining both the room and the opportunity for manoeuvre against the French rear. A. Rhinoceros also ignores the fact that none of the armies attacked—the Dutch, Belgian and French—fulfilled the condition of air strength emphasised as necessary for holding their own on the ground.

He complains that I "failed to warn us" of the danger that threatened. In making that charge he shows an entire disregard of the dilemma which faced a scientific student of the situation or critic of our Government's policy during that time—that of producing a realisation among our people of their hazardous position without weakening that position still further. While avoiding any sensational assertion that might create despondency, I endeavoured to convey the warning by a sober statement of the facts. I emphasised that Germany was likely to be able to mobilise twice as many divisions as the French and that the addition of the Italians could make the hostile total more than 3 to 1. I pointed out the still more significant fact that the Germans probably had ten mechanised divisions to three of the French. The implication should have been clear. I went as far as I could towards indicating the strategic weakness of Poland's situation, and the unfitness of her forces for modern warfare—far enough to draw an official protest from that quarter. I emphasised the necessity of securing the support of Russia and Turkey as being "the two essential props of any defensive structure in Eastern Europe that can provide security against aggression there and form a counterpoise to Germany's power of concentration in the West."

In discussing the defence of the West as a whole, I showed that, while the Belgian defences had been much improved along the Belgian-German frontier, on the Belgian-Dutch frontier "north of Maastricht there is a potential gateway that offers a defence problem even more difficult." "The risk, of course, would only develop as the sequel to a German violation of Dutch territory. But its potential gravity is such that it is not surprising to find that the Belgians look with anxious eyes on the state of their Dutch neighbour's defences, which may so closely affect the effectiveness of their own. They would seem to have too much justification at present for this anxiety." In regard to the Belgian army, I remarked that its most serious weakness lay in the obvious shortage of anti-aircraft guns and fighters—a deficiency which affected its "capacity to preserve that degree of cover in the air which is essential to sustained resistance on the ground."

All these points were, unfortunately, to be borne out by the events of May, 1940.

The article in the *Sunday Express* last February to which A. Rhinoceros refers, repeated, if more briefly, the same conclusions as to the conditions necessary for a successful offensive. It also indicated that Holland formed the most vulnerable target in the West, and was thus the most likely spot for any initial German move designed to alter the general strategic situation in the West. But in view of the tenseness of the situation, and the imminence of the risk, it should be clear, even to a rhinoceros, that a full exposition of the dangers was hampered by the necessity of abstaining from comments which might have discouraged the Dutch, Belgians or French in meeting the attack, or encouraged the Germans to deliver it. Thus the article was mainly directed towards warning our people that the balance of forces was heavily against the Allies, and that they must not count on a successful Allied offensive, as they had been led to expect—by many rash utterances made without regard to the real facts of the situation.

"If it may seem a hard conclusion to swallow," I remarked, they might find some consolation in "reflecting on the other great difference, this time for the better, between the situation to-day and that of a generation ago." Then, "the early loss of a large part of France and Belgium" had driven us to launch offensive after offensive without the means necessary for success. "Now, the frontiers of the West are inviolate—owing to the increased power of modern defence." A. Rhinoceros quotes the latter phrase out of its context, thus suggesting that it applied to the future, whereas it dealt merely with the situation at the moment, after six months of war.

I had referred to the chances of a German offensive earlier in the article, after explaining why a successful Allied offensive could not be expected. And what I actually wrote was—"For the Germans the prospect of an offensive might seem more promising. But their margin of superiority in numbers is not enough to support that promise. So far as can be gauged, only the introduction of some radically new weapon, or extraordinarily bad generalship on the Allies' side, could give them any chance of real success." At the time I wrote, I did not know, and would have found it hardly credible, that in May, after nine months of war, the French would still have no more than their original three mechanised divisions to counter a German armoured thrust. Nor that not a single British mechanised division would be in France, ready to take part in the one kind of counterstroke, an armoured counterstroke, that was likely to be effective under modern conditions.

In the event, it was in her mechanised forces, and air force, that Germany not merely attained but exceeded a 3 to 1 superiority. At the same time, with her new heavy tanks and her parachute troops, she fulfilled another suggested condition—the introduction of a new weapon. Even so, the more the facts emerge about the Allied breakdown in May, the more doubtful it becomes whether she could have succeeded in penetrating the Western Front without "extraordinarily bad generalship on the Allies' side."

On this score I readily admit that I did not foresee that the generalship would prove *so* bad as the event revealed. Despite my critical observations on the generalship shown in the last war—observations which have been so distasteful to A. Rhinoceros and his fellows—I continued to hope that another military generation might do better. That hope was qualified by a doubt, which underlay the remark in my *Sunday Express* article. But even the most disillusioned military critic could hardly have anticipated such "incredible mistakes" as were committed in May—worst of all, the way in which 20 of the best French and British divisions were pushed forward into Western Belgium to make a total of 40 divisions on the 60-mile front between Antwerp and Namur, while a single division of inferior class and scanty equipment was left to hold some 20 miles of front near Sedan. It had seemed so obvious that the German mechanised forces might make a thrust at this point that it did not occur to me that any commander could discount the likelihood of it. I hope that A. Rhinoceros may be satisfied by this admission.

B. H. LIDDELL HART

"FREEDOM'S BATTLE"

SIR,—In his review of Señor Vayo's book, published in your issue of August 31st, which is now brought to my attention, Mr. Kingsley Martin says of the author that he "avoids personal attacks and tells the story of the Spanish war with a dignified objectivity that is as welcome as it is rare." Then, your reviewer goes on to say that Señor Vayo speaks, amongst other subjects, about "the underhand dealing of Casado," and later, in a sentence which may be interpreted as coming from the author's pen or from the reviewer's pen, he says: "Casado, ambitious and disloyal, preferred to negotiate with Franco behind the Government's back."

These quotations are more than sufficient to shatter any claims to objectivity on the part of either author or reviewer. Mr. Kingsley Martin will allow me to say that his competence in Spanish affairs does not appear to justify his dogmatic assurance in siding with one particular group of Spanish opinion, out of which he sees nothing but treason and disloyalty.

I do not intend, however, to raise the many and complex issues of our civil war, but only to put Mr. Kingsley Martin right on a point of fact. He writes: "In one remarkable passage he explains that when the war was obviously lost for lack of material to fight with, he and Señor Azcarate, the Spanish Ambassador in Britain, repeatedly sent telegrams to Negrin seeking authority to use British offers to negotiate when complete capitulation might still have been avoided. They received no reply for the good reason that the Army Junta, which had for some time been defeatist, prevented these telegrams from reaching Negrin." No, Sir, this is not true. It may be that Señor Vayo and Señor Azcarate offered Señor Negrin to seek the mediation of the British Government, but it is not true that any Army Junta prevented their telegrams from reaching the Prime Minister.

I should add that one week before the fall of the Negrin Government, Dr. Negrin called together a committee of Military Commanders in Albacete. All the Commanders advised immediate peace. The Prime Minister explained that he had been trying, for a few months, to open peace negotiations, but had completely failed, and that, therefore, it was necessary to fight on. A fortnight before this meeting, Dr. Negrin had ordered the sale of the war material and stores (including food), which had been bought abroad. I possess documentary proof of this fact.

As I am an objective man, and, moreover, see no point in carrying on a civil war in your columns, I abstain from commenting on Señor Vayo's policy and on his respective loyalties to Spain and to the Soviet Union, a matter which cannot be dismissed by us Spaniards as lightly as by Mr. Kingsley Martin with a mere quotation from the *Daily Worker*.

London. CASADO.

[The confusion that attends a great military defeat makes it impossible for anyone except a historian with full documentary evidence to assess responsibility or motive. That Colonel Casado was disloyal to the Negrin Government and dealt with General Franco behind its back was, however, we thought, undisputed. We have always understood that he justified his action and he appears to do so in the above letter. Señor Del Vayo writes without passion. We should explain that the only reference to the *Daily Worker* in the article was a strong comment on its ungenerous attack on Señor Del Vayo whom the Communists so enthusiastically supported while he was in office.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

YOUTH MOVEMENTS

SIR,—Mr. Worsley's article on Youth Movements in your issue of September 21st was deeply interesting. Whilst Governmental willingness to tackle tthe problem of the 14–18 age group is healthy, shere must certainly be grave doubts about any cheme which even looks totalitarian.

May I point out, however, that there is a growing Youth Movement which is not in the least totalitarian? The movement to which I refer is the Youth Centre movement. I speak from personal knowledge of it in one of the critical areas mentioned—the Nuneaton fringe of the Coventry industrial area. Many of the members of the Nuneaton Centre are actually Coventry industrial employees.

It works by means of the "mixed club," carrying out physical, mental and spiritual activities. The Nuneaton Centre is already active in physical training classes, football, boxing, badminton, rhythmic and general dancing, arts and crafts classes, dramatics, a lively discussion group and a quite informal devotional circle.

The Centre opened in May, under the *aegis* of the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., and the local Mayor's Youth Committee. It is, however, autonomous. It has a governing body of local men and women interested in youth work, and a Members' Council is in process of formation. The present membership stands between 250 and 300, and is mainly drawn from precisely that section of industrial youth of which Mr. Worsley speaks.

I have watched the Centre's growth through the eyes of a convinced democrat, and I have been fascinated by four things. The first is the steady establishment of a democratic spirit and of community responsibility for the Centre. The second is the emergence from the ranks of effective leadership, for some of these 14–18's are proving very fine leaders. The third is an increasing readiness on the part of the members to provide and organise their own activities. The fourth is the frequency with which they say, "What on earth did we do with ourselves before we had this place?" and answer themselves, "We just roamed round with nothing to do."

In conclusion, the Centre is attracting young people of varying political opinions and none at all, and of every religious denomination in the town and a great many of none at all.

I commend this new and growing movement, already established in widely separated parts of the country, to any locality which wishes to solve its youth problem in a thoroughly democratic way.

Baptist Church, JOHN PHILIP GILES.
Nuneaton.

SIR,—Mr. Worsley and your correspondent commenting on this article, have both ignored two of the important Associations already endeavouring to deal with this problem. I refer to the National Association of Boys' Clubs and the National Council of Girls' Clubs. These Associations are, to the best of their ability, endeavouring to cope with the conditions that wartime and blackout have imposed on the boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20, and are providing both recreational and educational activities.

By setting up attractive programmes and catering for their various interests, these boys and girls are joining the Clubs and are thus coming in contact with educational and cultural subjects which otherwise they may never have discovered. Physical training, "Keep-Fit" and various forms of dancing play a large part in the programme, and hence it would appear that these Associations have already provided the groundwork of the task to be undertaken by the Board of Education.

That tremendous scope is within the range of the various Clubs cannot be ignored, for, with the assistance of the Local Educational Authorities, it is possible to educate and produce responsible citizens amongst a section of the community which hitherto has not had the opportunity of realising these responsibilities, and in considering methods of dealing with this problem, education in citizenship must play a large part.

But, whatever scheme is put forward, it is essential that any suggestion of compulsion be vetoed and that Education as interpreted by the Board be also ruled out, as it is only by Youth itself discovering its own latent interests that the best results will be produced.

Therefore, if the Board must glamourise itself, let it do it through the medium of these Associations, giving them wider powers, extending the grants and providing more specialised training for the men and women who have given proof of their vision and leadership. JOAN M. BELTON-HOGG,

17 Ireton Grove, Club Leader
Attenborough, Notts.

PUSHKIN

SIR,—*Re* Mr. Pritchett's article on Pushkin. In 1830 the Russian poet Pushkin clamoured for censorship to protect the community against books like the *Mémoires* of Vidocq, "who calls himself *un bon français*, as if people like him had a fatherland." "Books like those by Vidocq, the spy, and Samson, the executioner (Pushkin concludes) and the like, do not offend any dominant religion, nor any Government, nor even morality in the general meaning of the word. Yet one can't help feeling that they are an insult to social decency . . . a scandal of a new kind completely overlooked by the laws."

Pushkin's indignation flares up, in defence of Milton against the way Victor Hugo and Alfred de Vigny represent him, the one in *Cromwell*, "the most absurd work of an otherwise talented writer" and in *Cinq Mars*, the work of "the prudish, affected" Count Vigny. Compare all those absurdities with Walter Scott's scene in *Woodstock*, etc.

Both instances of Pushkin's reactions may interest observers of the changes in literary taste.

Lodsworth, Sussex. A. MEYENDORFF

THE TRIOLET

SIR,—It is an ungrateful task in a competitor to criticise his judge; and if I now find myself urged to dissent from Mr. Worsley's handling of Competition No. 553, I hope it will be credited to me that I have refrained from the naughty deed through many long years, in spite of much provocation.

In his report, Mr. Worsley writes: "A purist, I disqualified those who did not abide by the strictnesses of the form." What could be fairer? We have, among others, Austin Dobson's authority for the statement that the triolet consists of eight lines with two rhymes. The first pair of lines are repeated as the seventh and eight, while the first is repeated as the fourth. Gleeson White, in his useful anthology entitled "Ballades and Rondeaus, Chants Royal, Sestinas, Villanelles, etc.," remarks that the triolet "is inflexible in its laws, brief though it be." Purists like Mr. Worsley and myself will say aye to that. It is, therefore, the more difficult to account for the fact that Mr. Worsley's choice for First Prize is guilty of one imperfect rhyme and one doctored seventh line, and the second of his other prize-winners has a fourth line which doesn't contain even one of the words in the first. Even if these alleged triolets were outstandingly good as unclassified verse (which they are not) I cannot see why a judge of Mr. Worsley's rigid views did not disqualify them. I myself time and again (to the open satisfaction of the competition setter) have been disqualified on much slighter grounds.

With which relief to my overcharged feelings, I retire once more to the patient and uncomplaining anonymity of TOWANBUCKET

Mr. Worsley writes:

"Please, Mr. Editor,
Whatever shall I do?
Admit I just misread it? Or
Please Mr. Editor
And swear I never said it? Or
Kiss Towanbucket's shoe?
Please, Mr. Editor,
Whatever shall I do?" ED. *N.S. & N.*]

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Mr. Noah Lammock, the well-known writer, was depressed. He had a professional weakness for the vast and the new and for many years had believed that a " vast New Peace of universal opportunity and fulfilment, was unfolding before mankind." Instead, there was a vast new war which would lead, as far as he could see, to a long vista of wars. Like that great writer, H. G. Wells,* Mr. Lammock recalled the fate of the Dinosaurs and the Megatheria and feared that man, unable to transcend himself in the time of crisis, was passing to extinction. A tragic dualism ran through human affairs. The new hope carried within itself the new terror. Science had promised and science was destroying. There had always been the will to transcend in man, but now, it seemed, that will itself was doomed. Mr. Noah Lammock sat at his desk, his paper lying blank before him, awaiting the end.

What else was in his mind? Did it seem strange to him that this war was in fact doing some of the things that the admired Mr. H. G. Wells had once described, like some romantic wish, in his scientific romances; and even doing some of the things he wanted: abolishing the peasantry for example, and the small nations which had required so many visas on his passport and had stood in the way of those political simplifications, those enlarged political areas, which must be a step on the way to the unity of the world? Was Mr. Wells oppressed (as no doubt Mr. Lammock was) by the way that the new world created by scientific war and highly scientific politics, not only asked a passport for your person, but a passport for your views? Probably we are reading too much into Mr. Lammock's musings. Obliged to consider politics with a mind that was temperamentally unpolitical, he was exasperated, like a man who tries a cross-country journey on the railway without looking up his Bradshaw first. There is no train there. As he paced the platform Mr. Lammock would be impatient of the niggling precision of time-tables, would protest that trains ought to be abolished as biological anachronisms, and would end by appealing to God or the G.W.R. for a " miracle " and a fresh start.

But miracles do happen to those who expect them. As Mr. Lammock sat at his desk the maid came in and announced that a gentleman was outside. " What is his name? " asked Mr. Lammock. " Well, Sir," said the maid, " he *says* he's God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth." A stroke of luck for Mr. Lammock. The kind of situation Mr. H. G. Wells himself would have enjoyed. The faithful were known frequently to call on the Lord—and how disastrous it was the last time the Archbishop of Canterbury did so!—but here was the Lord calling on the indifferent. Cap in hand, too, just as he might have called on Mr. H. G. Wells, asking for help. He was quite frank about it all. He was the genuine old Testament Jehovah, bearded, paternal, a little flustered and with some apologies for what he had started. He would discuss anything, he would admit His mistakes. Like other authors, the Almighty said, he had merely created because he wanted response: " I wanted to be surprised. I have been. . . ."

So surprised that He had considered winding the whole thing up and making—how Mr. Wells would be interested, reflected Mr. Lammock—" a new Deal, a fresh start." He had come to Mr. Lammock because of the coincidence of his name. Noah Lammock. In a nutshell the idea was "why not a new Noah's Ark"? What the Almighty wanted were blue prints of the things to save for the new world which he would build when the present inundation of war had subsided from the new Ararat.

One cannot imagine a weaker position than the Almighty's. With a shade more political sense he might have improved it from the start if, say, he had employed the Devil, his ever attendant shadow, to persuade Mr. Lammock to call on Him. As it was Mr. Lammock had easily the best of the first interview. The Almighty was on the defensive at once about the Garden of Eden and had to swear that if the new ark landed at the new Ararat, things like the Babel episode would not be repeated. Eden was an error, as the shadow had said it would be:

> " Love," said I. " Then sex," said my shadow. " They must grow, produce energy, recuperate, crave and eat." I made my purring carnivores and hardly had Adam stroked them before they showed their teeth.

Before such candour Mr. Lammock could afford to give away a point or two. There was an undoubted historical interest in what the Almighty had said. The world " historical " was a bit of a blow to the old gentleman—who was really a nice old bird whose apologetic ex-jauntiness rather grew on you, Mr. Lammock thought—because, well, He had had the idea of continuing in the creation business: " I want still to struggle with my own shadow and bring Adam into free, expanding fellowship with myself—that old original idea."

Mr. Lammock, enormously influenced as he was, though with reservations, by H. G. Wells, did not rise to that suggestion. He had already had to put his foot down hard at an earlier proposal that Mr. Lammock should take his wife on the Ark, a refusal which seemed to indicate a limited prospect for the human race, when the New Deal came off at Shinar. Still Mr. Lammock could afford to soften refusal by flattery:

> But can you be of any real help to us now in this endless Universe you have thrust upon us? You are the Creator, you are the Sole First Cause: you account for everything perfectly, as nothing else could do; I do not see how we could possibly have come into existence without you; but now we do exist and are fairly launched, what good have your subsequent interventions been?

Some rudeness about the epistles of St. John and St. Jude and about Revelations followed, and then he drove home shrewdly:

> " As you grow attenuated and impalpable," Mr. Lammock told the Almighty, " as we see through you more and more, your *shadow* will also grow less. As God fades out, the Devil fades out also. Even now you seem quivering on the very verge of non-existence."

But here the Almighty, impalpable though He was, came into his own:

> " Yes," He replied, " And man as he grows clearer and firmer, discovers that *he* too casts a shadow. . . . It is quite possible that Satan and I have played our part in the human drama. I may have become a mere phantom of my former self. That means only that the struggle between benevolence and corrosive resistance, between the light and shadow it casts, embodies itself anew—in Adam, in Man himself, in you and your kind. . . ."

And, winning this point, the Almighty quickly made another:

> It is hard to imagine right off, what an Ark of Escape from this inundation of war and violence may mean, but it may involve at some time, an appeal to the multitude . . . consider what I am now in men's imaginations, consider my—my publicity value.

In the end, to his own astonishment, Mr. Lammock accepted; to his own astonishment he suddenly found he could draw up what he wanted to salvage from the war; what would make his revolution. I will not digress on this point except to say that on old quarrels like Marxism and Soviet Russia, Mr. Lammock is slightly more indulgent than his master, H. G. Wells, used to be. But the most astonishing thing that occurred to Mr. Lammock was that he woke up one day to find himself on the Ark, thirty days out, and down to preach the Sunday sermon, with the Almighty at the harmonium. There was, it is true, a chronological difficulty: Jonah turned up. He had been found in the cargo disguised as the spirit of Munich. That problem was still a problem when Mr. Lammock's story ended.

And what was Mr. Lammock going to take with him? A *cache* of knowledge: " something quintessential for the elite and something very strong and clear and simple for the masses of mankind." Mr. Lammock is as expert as Mr. Wells in the making of phrases. Speaking of the difficulty of making the Ark idea acceptable and distinguishable—and what but this simple formula more accurately describes German and Russian policy?—he says, " I shall feel like a man trying to sell Hoover cleaners to an Arab encampment in a dust storm." Selling Hoovers for God. At what Group meeting did one hear that last? Looking back on the Almighty's case one wonders if He made the best of it. He has, for example, certain advantages over his rivals on the other side of the Channel. I am surprised He did not mention them. But perhaps He did. There is indeed an evil principle in the world, a Shadow who with typical malice intervened in the binding of my copy of *All Aboard for Ararat* and left out twenty pages. Is that loss prophetic of things to come? The *cache* was damaged. What was in it? That quintessence for the elite? That something strong and simple for the masses? What was it that saved mankind?

God at the harmonium! " Ye must be born again ": good lower middle-class revivalism to which the response comes across the waters from California, " Ye must achieve a new mutation," in accents more fluting and refined. It is interesting, this contemporary social approach to religion made from the opposite directions of ebullient optimism and contracting pessimism. Is it a nostalgia? Is it a cynicism of political expediency? It seems to me that Mr. Wells is right in suggesting that the moral fervour of religion could be revived in a revolutionary cause, despite the fact that so much of the freedom we have won is due to our emancipation from the claims of the churches. But the churches cannot either protect or console the individual in his present and growing struggle against the State, unless they become revolutionary. Then perhaps they can teach Mr. Lammock politics, explaining to him that there is no such thing as a miraculous break with the past and that a modern ark, which attempts it, may become another *City of Benares*. V. S. Pritchett.

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¶ Professor Newton's 100 YEARS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE traces the progress of the ideal of liberty, self-government and free co-operation between the democratic nations of the Commonwealth. "He handles the many threads of his narrative with great dexterity." — *Times Literary Supplement.* 15s. net

¶ Clare Hollingworth was the last Anglo-Saxon journalist to leave Poland, and her THREE WEEKS' WAR IN POLAND is described by *The Daily Telegraph* as "one of the best War books that have appeared." 6s. net

¶ Ronald Firbank—the intellectual's blue-eyed boy. His novels are 4s. net each in the famous Rainbow edition; most people find CARDINAL PIRELLI the best value.

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the work of a likeable and, I should imagine, a happy man, who has savoured to the full a life spent on the warpath of perpetual controversy.

I said "usually" advisedly, for Mr. Lunn is not *always* wrong. One can agree for example that this is a war between those who care for freedom and those "who would enslave the soul of man," and with Mr. Lunn's verdict on the enslaver-in-chief, Hitler, "a thug responsible for a system of assassination and torture." One cannot only agree with but warmly applaud the letter which Mr. Lunn drafted and persuaded the Archbishop of York to sign, appealing to Hitler to inaugurate the Olympic Winter Games at Garmisch in 1936 by a general act of "amnesty for the benefit of all those who are suffering imprisonment for religious or racial reasons." Moreover, I share his love for Oxford, "the first English institution which I have loved and still love without qualification and without reservation," and, provided I am allowed to substitute the Lakes for the Alps, endorse all that he has to say in praise of mountains and their salutary effect upon the spirit, I subscribe to his denunciation of the pursuit of art for art's sake, and believe with him that art is "a window opening on to a world of eternal values," and I am intrigued and disposed to accept his account of the development of Mickey Mouse from the Gothic gargoyle stage (admirable) through a Baroque stage (bearable) into the present respectable Royal Academy stage. Above all, I agree with him that man's reason can on occasion reach truth and though it may be biased by prejudice and warped by emotion, its conclusions are not always and necessarily reflections of his economic class or needs, or by-products of his sexual complexes. I agree, in fact, that not all reason is rationalising.

But though I agree that reason *can* reveal the truth, I am bound to add that I would scarcely have guessed as much from the pages of this book. For the deliverances of the author's reason are at times so extremely odd. That the Church is the last refuge of rationalism; that it is the life which Christians are enjoined to lead rather than the beliefs which they are required to accept that keep people out of the Church; that Hitler and Mussolini derive their authority from the votes of the people; that General Franco's cause was just and that though there were outrages on both sides, the Spanish Reds took the atrocity prize; that almost all intellectuals are cowards—these are only a selection of the more curious conclusions to which Mr. Lunn's reasoning processes lead him. As one notes the *obiter dicta* of this gusty, good-humoured but wrong-headed book, one finds oneself assailed by a certain doubt. Although a rationalist in the sense defined, Lunn is prepared to concede to the modern prophets of irrationalism that men will "be less influenced by the intellectualism of the doctrinaires than by their own deep-rooted and subconscious beliefs." If we add "wishes" to "beliefs" we shall, I think, find it easier to understand some of the opinions and attitudes that, taken at their face value, seem so surprising. For example, throughout the book there run, like two recurrent motifs, the author's dislike of intellectuals and his hatred of Communism. Intellectuals, scarcely ever mentioned without a gibe, are chiefly censored for their pusillanimity. Because they are cowards that they depreciate heroism; because they are cowards that they emigrate to America. Chicken-hearted, lily-livered academics, they sit comfortably in their studies excogitating theories about working men without having the least idea about how to talk to a working man.

Lunn himself, brought up in the Radical tradition, was a lamentable example of the species. He was cured by religion and by the Alps. There follows praise of climbing and of the direct intercourse with nature and one's fellow men which is achieved in moments of danger. At times this sort of thing runs to almost Fascist lengths. Thus Wells is rebuked for his failure to admire such men as Alexander and Napoleon who have been successful in organising mass slaughter on a large scale: "These men," we are told, "made history . . . where Mr. Wells failed," on which the appropriate comment seems to be the less such history is made the better. Again we are told that it is only in a world in which "the warrior is in supreme control" that we get great art; when the world is peaceful art decays. Thinking of the art produced in the world of Ghengiz Kahn or Tamberlaine or the Dictators of Paraguay or of Napoleon—"I am told we have no literature in France now; I must speak to the Minister of the Interior about it," said Napoleon—one permits oneself to wonder whether Mr. Lunn's admiration of the "hearty" may not have carried him a little too far; wonders, too, whether the author's subconscious may not have had something to do with his verdicts. Lunn made a mess of his Rugger and thought he was a coward; he made a name for himself in ski-ing and climbing and decided that he was not. I deduce that his gratitude at discovering that he could be a "hearty" among the "hearties," is responsible for his continual harping upon the "hearties'" merits. By training and tradition an intellectual he feels that intellectuals have never accorded him the position to which his very considerable talents entitle him. He has never somehow been quite one of them and yet he ought to have been. Sour grapes ferment in the unconscious and we get a series of gibes at intellectuals. How the poor things have admired Russia and how, for example, wrong they have been! And it is at this point that I really want to fall foul of Mr. Lunn, not because I am a Communist, but because I can see how the hatred of social injustice combined with the hope that Russia might end it made men lenient to failings to which Lunn wrongly supposes they are blind. Nowhere in the book does he give the slightest hint of recognising the existence of a social problem. The poor are not mentioned, the fact that undeserved poverty is a disgrace to civilisation is ignored. It is a pity that this good-hearted Christian man should be so blind to the injustices of Capitalism and deaf to the appeal of its victims, and that in all the crucial issues of our time we should find him, in spite of all his chivalry and generosity, passing by on the other side.

C. E. M. JOAD

STOCK DETECTION

Picture of the Victim. By JOHN STEPHEN STRANGE. *Collins.* *7s. 6d.*

Let Him Lie. By GERALDINE BRIDGMAN. *Heinemann.* *7s. 6d.*

The Opera House Murders. By DAN BILLANY. *Faber and Faber.* *7s. 6d.*

The Man Who Murdered Goliath. By GEOFFREY HOMES. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* *5s.*

Murder at Lilac Cottage. By JOHN RHODE. *Collins.* *7s. 6d.*

The Four Defences. By J. J. CONNINGTON. *Hodder and Stoughton.* *8s. 3d.*

How hard it is to invent a new detective plot! With two or three hundred authors racking their brains in England and America, year after year passes without a single original discovery. The old plots and the old motives have to do, threadbare though they are; but there is really no reason why the form in which the stock materials are made up should be so trite. The best conjuring is performed with the sleeves rolled up; and Mrs. Christie sets that standard in detection. Only nobody follows her! The fashion is for loose floppy sleeves, from which motives and evidence can be slipped out at judicious intervals while the trick proceeds. The spectacle may be thrilling or exciting, but it requires little dexterity and no cleverness. The reader's intelligence can only be exercised in anticipating the contents of the sleeve by its contours, an amusing but simple pastime.

All the six books this month follow this stock pattern. In *Picture of the Victim* Mr. Strange has to conceal material evidence until the last chapter, but we observe a rather familiar-looking lump beginning to work its way down his sleeve long before that. Not that this need impair our pleasure in a sound plot. Gantt, the cameraman, is sent out by his newspaper to get a picture of Jesse Jordan on Jordan's wedding day (Jordan being a particularly inaccessible kind of Long Island millionaire). "I'll get him dead or alive," says Gantt, or words to that effect; and, of course, arrives on the scene just in time to see Jordan slumped on a garden seat with a bullet through his shirt-front. Mr. Strange provides a nice choice of murderers and motives, and neatly confuses the love interest; while Gantt gets around as only these American cameramen know how. All the same, there seems a bit missing. No, there it is, rounding Mr. Strange's elbow: you can't mistake the significance of a lump that shape!

The essential construction of *Let Him Lie* is precisely the same as that of *Picture of the Victim.* A harmless Gloucestershire squire is murdered while pruning his orchard before he has carried out his intended excavation of a neolithic earth-work. Again there is a wide field of suspects and motives; and again the reader must decide whether the victim's intentions (in the first case to marry, in this case to excavate) are side-issues or the crux of the crime. Miss Bridgman is a new writer, with a great gift for character and dialogue; and *Let Him Lie* is very well-written and quite exciting. But is she playing fair? Are her sleeves rolled up, as they appear to be? Unfortunately, no; she has at last to produce a motive from thin air; and the motive is that the criminal is mad! A sad anti-climax to a most carefully thought-out plot.

The Opera House Murders is an English version of the tough American style, with plenty of bashing, shooting and unscrupulous violence. Mr. Billany writes jerky, spirited prose, and tries his best to pretend that the English countryside and the English temperament lend themselves to criminal gangs who torture their victims with glowing cigarettes. But he does not neglect the detective side of his plot, and his master villain is as competently concealed until the last chapter as master villains can be.

The Man Who Murdered Goliath is an average example of the same thing, only on its home ground, California. Goliath, a retired mining magnate, telephones the local newspaper to say that he's shooting himself, and apparently does so. Unfortunately for the murderer, the newspaperman remembers the story in which this suicide hoax was first perpetrated. Mr. Homes writes competently but without real enthusiasm, and the book is only included on the list as the best available of its kind.

Murder at Lilac Cottage and *The Four Defences* are by two old friends of ours, and confirm their industry and reliable workmanship without adding to their lustre. In the bad old days many of our old friends, to make their little secrets as watertight as possible, used to keep back even the bodily introduction of their criminals until nearly the last page. Fortunately, the umpires have managed to rule that unfair practice right out. Now we are always allowed at least a peep at the villains' faces from the start, while the authors content their miserly instincts by keeping back all the evidence against them as long as possible. But they hardly reckon with their readers' perspicacity. Who are the persons in *Murder at Lilac Cottage* and *The Four Defences* whose presence near the scene of crime and on the first fifty pages seems totally unnecessary? Mr. Rhode and Mr. Connington must learn to cover up better, if they hope to bewilder us at the finish. At the leisurely production of evidence and the laborious putting of two and two together both these gentlemen are masters. Nothing could be more sound, more convincing or more slow than their respective plots. Mr. Rhode's deals with a mystery man in the country, who is struck on the head by an iron bar on entering his garage one evening. Mr. Connington's is the Rouse case all over again, an unidentifiable body in a burning car, with a few extra refinements. The four defences are the four successive red herrings with which the murderer hopes to defeat the arm of the law. But the arm of the law in *The Four Defences* is reinforced by Mr. Connington's imposing Counsellor, so what chance has the villain got? Anyway, we knew who he was the instant he appeared by his very unobtrusive manner.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

THE FALL OF PARIS

The Last Days of Paris. A JOURNALIST'S DIARY. By ALEXANDER WERTH. *Hamish Hamilton.* 8s. 6d.

The Last Days of Paris is not a book to which people will be referring, whatever the condition of the world, in five years' time; and its author no doubt regards it as a stop-gap while he submits events to a longer scrutiny. But pick up his book to-day, read it now, and its effect is overwhelming. It catches the reader still near enough to events (last May) to revive his own memory in detail; it overtakes him at the moment when even those who have known and love France find their sympathies slipping away in indifference. Aching indifference: that is the most we can be said to feel for a country which our bombers visit with ghastly regularity. Mr. Werth's diary comes to wake us up. One gets from its pages a great deal more than newspaper-reading—beginning with eye-witness

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accounts and ending with obituaries—has been able to provide.

The diary form was peculiarly suited to convey a picture of the month in which France collapsed. After eight months of nothing-doing, these four weeks in which events were so telescoped that invasion, campaign, exodus, defeat followed one another almost before the eye could look round. If impressions and wisps of truth had not been snatched at and set down at once, there would have been no way of capturing the quick phases of disaster. History—Mr. Werth has not waited for that—gives a reasonable perspective of events at the expense of immediacy; journalism, heavily censored, does not admit nearly enough of the truth. *The Last Days of Paris* steals some of the merit of both genres, and sends out also feelers from the imagination which the historian and the journalist might distrust. The advantage, in the circumstances, of a loose, spontaneous method of writing is that what the soldier (and the concierge) said is for once evidence. Many things which may seem irrelevant to a time of crisis are admitted simply because they were uppermost in the writer's mind when he sat down to write; and they are not the least telling touches in his picture.

It was, for example, a remarkably fine summer, in Paris as in London, and day after day this was clashing in the minds of Parisians with the fact that Hitler had at last launched his invasion. The brilliant weather, theatres, a buzz of conversation in cafés and round kiosks, map-plotting, lights in the Seine at night, the excitement of the first *alertes* ("Oh, oh, an aeroplane!"), rumours scarcely more fantastic than the facts, meals in little restaurants, daily press conferences, Bonnet's villainous mug at a War Office window, meetings with Picasso, an article written and kept back, the Sacré Coeur by moonlight, the disasters of Sedan and the Meuse, drinks at the Deux Magots, a single sheet newspaper and duck specially recommended by the patron: that is the sort of jumble that went on in Mr. Werth's life and, with variations, in the lives of most Parisians at that time. He has an eye that picks out what is significant in unimportant things. On the day of invasion, his waiter at the Café Viel brings him a vermouth instead of a dubonnet, and he growls: neither action nor response would have occurred the day before. And this paragraph goes on to note symptoms of the change of mind:

> On my way to Faucon's *prix fixe* restaurant I buy a *Paris-Soir*. Pretty piece of news: several French towns bombed—Nancy, Luxeuil, Pontoise, Lille, Colmar. The old woman at the kiosk is gloomy and perturbed. "*Nous aurons encore les Boches chez nous*," she says. I've noticed that so long as the Germans were attacking others they were Allemands; now they've become Boches. That may be healthy; what is unhealthy is that she seemed to take invasion for granted. At Faucon's there were three women at the next table, all of them rather worried. They talked platitudes, though one of them, a little brunette, talked to me in a kind of appealing way as though hoping I'd say something reassuring. "Elle est magnifique la Royale Air Force, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur?" The waitress looked worried. Her daughter, she said, was at Nancy, which had been bombed this morning.

I have quoted this passage just because it is *not* a particularly striking or exceptional piece of writing; it is, however, typical of a diary which never falls below that level; and note the acute observation—the comment about the Boches, the stranger's *appealing* question about the Air Force. Events provide the high-lights without any need of Mr. Werth's writing up to them. How well, for example, from a series of alert diurnal jottings one senses the change of atmosphere as the Germans draw nearer; the streets begin to look empty; rumours grow wilder—secret weapons and a bomb that kills by blast are mentioned; an end-of-the-world eccentric has new dignity as he pauses to accuse a crowd with his eye; the attitude towards England shifts from "they aren't pulling their weight" to "if only they can hold out for six months." And so on, from day to day—every hour of the political journalist's day zigzagging like a butterfly that describes its fever-chart across a garden—until the climax of open defeat: soldiers dazed or drunk appearing in the eastern suburbs; packed lorries, cars, prams, strung out in long lines to the south. All this Mr. Werth describes as it came to him with his morning roll, between the lines of newspapers, during pauses at the sealed-lip conferences of press or War Office. As a journalist he had the advantage of a professional interest in all that was going on round him—steadying in a crisis; and like most journalists with a realistic political knowledge he had insured himself against pessimism by exploring the worst possibilities before they developed.

A number of general points stand out of the diary, and some of these are dealt with critically, though briefly, in an Epilogue. As I read through Mr. Werth's narrative of a disintegrating Paris (it is, by the by, exciting as well as depressing to read) I noted the following:

(1) For twenty years the French had feared invasion and at its first appearance (occupation of the Rhineland) there was the first symptom of defeatism—"Oh well, let them have it; we shall get two years' peace."

(2) The understanding between France and ourselves was never as close as politicians and newspapers here tried to make us believe. Mistrust had persisted since the time of Sanctions, through the Maginot months (the complaint was that our troops were too few and too well paid), and up to the final weeks, when we abandoned the French *before* collapse. (Mr. Werth, curiously enough, does not mention Churchill's offer of Union; that came ludicrously late?)

(3) If the French collapse can be put down to a single cause, it was the censorship of news. People weren't told the truth until the eleventh hour, and the effect then was disastrous.

Now these facts are not exactly new to anyone who has read Mr. Werth and one or two other commentators on French affairs during the last few months. But their extent and their implications may shock even now. What Mr. Werth does is to bring back before our eyes the months of May and June, with these facts undisguised, and without his saying much they are drummed home. But for the Censorship, he says, which hamstringed any realistic discussion of events, he would never have taken to this diary as the only way left for "letting off steam."

G. W. STONIER

NEW NOVELS

Star of Satan. By GEORGES BERNANOS. *The Bodley Head.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Men Against the Sky. By WINIFRED GALBRAITH. *Jonathan Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

When the Whippoorwill—. By MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS. *Heinemann.* 8*s.*

Bewildering Cares. By WINIFRED PECK. *Faber and Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

With the exception of M. Bernanos' novel, there is nothing this week that I can offer with entire confidence unless the reader happens to specialise in one or more of the three ensuing subjects: China, the Southern United States, and the Church of England. Perhaps I should postulate an interest in the Catholic Church for prospective readers of M. Bernanos, but I feel that *Star of Satan* has strength enough, in spite of a certain agonising over points of conscience, to stand on its own.

Sous le Soleil de Satan, as the French original was called, was published before *The Diary of a Country Priest*. (It is also worth while remembering that M. Bernanos wrote the classical vindication of the Spanish Republic's attitude towards the Catholics.) The novel under consideration is divided into three parts, the action in each case taking place in the Pas de Calais, in or near the town of Campagne. The first section, "The Story of Mouchette," consists of an exceptionally profound study of an intimidatingly banal situation, namely the seduction of the little *bourgeoise* by the local Marquis, whom she murders. A problem of evil is posed, ready for the impact of the novel's principal character, Father Donissan, or "The Saint of Lumbres." The valuable quality in this, the first part, lies in the perspicacity with which the author examines Mouchette's suddenly flowering, purely intuitive grasp of realities. With equal speed, and from the same source, there rush upon her maturity and spiritual disaster. The second part, "The Temptation of Despair," tells the story of Father Donissan's religious training; his impressive struggle with a personification of Satan, and his interview with Mouchette. The third part, "The Saint of Lumbres," is a moving, and often beautiful, account of his death. These culminating pages are complicated by a certain hyper-intensity, and the introduction of a new and unnecessarily unsympathetic portrait of Anatole France.

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One key to the book is to be found in those paragraphs in which the author pauses for a moment to apostrophise the type for whom he harbours a perhaps excessive contempt—the atheist intellectual. M. Bernanos denies him even the consolation of contact with, or knowledge of, true evil—the real Satan.

> Why should he (Satan) trouble to wrest from the earth those who crawl about on its surface like beasts, until the day they return to it? They creep unmolested to their fate. His vengeance is reserved for saints.

The above quotation is also a key to the history of Father Donissan, who "was duped by his strength, as others are duped by their weakness." At another point in the book the author reflects on the origin of Mouchette's wickedness, and traces it to

> the initial fault, in a child's heart. . . .

It is upon this sentence that I would like, if I had the space, to build a criticism of some of the author's fundamental beliefs. For I am as certain as I can be of anything that the core of a child's nature consists of primal instincts which are neither good nor evil until the developments inherent in them becoming adult make them so. Evil, like Good, is made, not born. This, indeed, is the flaw in the conception of Mouchette. I will conclude, however, by repeating my conviction that a predilection for doctrinal subtleties is not necessary for the enjoyment of this novel: the people are portrayed with as much acuity, and if anything with a greater imaginative comprehension, than the problems.

The author of *Men Against the Sky* spent the last fifteen years in China as a missionary (a fact not stressed by her publishers) and university lecturer. Inspired by what she has seen of the effect of war, generally from the air, on a remarkably complete cross-section of that country, her quiet, balanced stories will give pleasure to anyone with even the smallest interest in the Sino-Japanese conflict. A milder Somerset Maugham, the author suffers a little from what some might call fairness of mind, and others an inability to make it up. For instance, in an excellent story about Mao Tse Tung (whose importance she values, but does not fully understand) it is quite plain, from numerous overtones, that she feels he is in the right. If not as a Communist, at least as an anti-Japanese. Yet nowhere in her volume does she face this issue except indirectly. This rigid determination to see both sides, based though it is on the highest Christian motives, sometimes results in a divergent strabismus; instead of detachment, dimness. Nevertheless, this must be one of the few agreeable contemporary works written by a missionary, and the following stories are particularly worthy of attention. "Angels Unawares," where one of those familiar young English travel-writers abuses the touching hospitality of a mission-worker. "Eldorado," about Mao Tse Tung, and the extraordinary "Resist the Enemy" University at Yenan. "The Convert," about a captured Japanese officer. "The Spy," about the curious self-justification of a Chinese traitor. "The Coward," an admirable sketch of a priest, and, lastly, "The Conqueror," the story in which the author lets herself go a beneficial and welcome extra inch. *When the Whippoorwill—* is also a collection of short stories, by the author of *The Yearling*. Less convincing than Miss Galbraith's, and a little too dreamy and over-idealised, they nevertheless make warmer, more refreshing, reading. Of the four books reviewed, this is the best for air raids, and especially for those who entertain a natural, or acquired, nostalgia for "the deep South." The characters are nearly all drawn from those odd, simple people, the Florida Crackers. Sugar-cane cooking; night-fishing in the Gulf of Mexico; moonshining; square-dancing—it is all there, deployed against the background of a sultry and poetic vegetation. The language has its charm,

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too. In " Cocks Must Crow " one suspicious woman introduces herself to another :

> " You're a widow, they tell me. Soda ? "
> " Water. Water and whisky."
> " I never heard tell of a water-widow."
> " He was drunk as ten coots and fell in the water and never did come up. A lake's as good a burying-place as any."

Among others, " Varmints " is a good story about an eccentric mule, and " Benny and the Bird Dogs " has something pleasantly crazy about it that eludes definition. In " Jacob's Ladder," which is really a short novel, the scene moves for a time to a remote corner of the Florida coast. If the author is to be relied on, this must be one of the most obsessing and desirable places in the world. Palms, pelicans, oysters, cypresses, oleanders, figs, unfamiliar fish, water-turkeys, fiddler crabs, and endless uninhabited islands to explore. Delicious. *Bewildering Cares* is not a novel that will appeal very strongly to those under forty, unless they have a clergyman in the family; but as careful, sensitive and entertaining comment on the harassments of Vicarage life to-day it is well worth reading. Mrs. Lacely, the Vicar's wife, is the narrator, and the action is laid in a small Midland manufacturing town during one week of the winter of 1939. They have trouble with their curate, who preaches a pacifist sermon, and then Mrs. Lacely reflects as follows :

> If it is for us to make our own choice in every given instance between complete pacifism and military intervention, how can Christianity preserve a united front ?

This is also meant as a serious question put by the author to the reader, and the reader is, I think, intended to reply, " Well, no, it is not for us." My reply would be that Christianity will never *recover* a united front until each Christian does make his choice in such matters and " in every given instance." The author, and Mrs. Lacely, are a shade too fond of Compromise. If, as Mrs. Lacely resignedly hints, the duties of an English clergyman to-day consist of one compromise after another, it would seem to confirm one's suspicion that something is very, very wrong with the institution that he represents. However, the Lacelys behave extremely well to the erring curate, and the Vicar, who is perfectly aware of his dilemma, is, after all, equally one of the author's creations. He is made to say :

> " Nothing . . . brings us any nearer a decision," said Arthur, rumpling his hair. " Do you know, I sometimes think this drama, or something like it, must be going on all over Europe. Personally I think we have all reached one of those points where political and religious thinking can't be separated."

I could wish, incidentally, that the author, and a number of cultured, observant women writers of her kind, would try to treat the world less as if it were some kind of Natural History Museum. Or if this attitude is unconquerable, must they always inspect the exhibits, with shrewd kindliness and discreet humour, from such a distance ? Let them, rather, rush boldly in, elude the guides, poke passionately about, and get thoroughly mixed up with the fur and bones. But perhaps I am being unnecessarily exigent, and there is certainly one day in this week of *Bewildering Cares* which no one could wish to improve upon. It is the Quiet Day for all the assembled clergymen's wives of the district. I will end with a characteristic passage :

> " I pray for victory, and peace on that condition," announced old Mrs. Cummings, majestically.
> " I pray so much for our enemies," said Mrs. Gage, leaning forward more intently than ever, and crossing her thin, beautiful ankles. " I pray daily for Thy child Hitler, Thy son von Ribbentrop and Thy child Stalin. You don't know how it *helps*."

BRIAN HOWARD

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

" FRAU BACH-BUSONI, I presume ? " said the apocryphal German, on being introduced to the wife of the famous pianist-composer. This anecdote is almost a chestnut, and I repeat it here only to point the dreadful fate of those who dabble in the ticklish business of transcription. Held chords spread into arpeggios, when the piano has to be served ; arpeggio figures gawkishly handed about among the strings, or transformed into some impotent tremolo, when an " orchestral version " is in question ; seventeenth- or eighteenth-century music pepped up with harps and miscellaneous percussion, when plain strings or organ have to be " rendered " in such a way as to prevent a modern audience from re-crossing its legs, sighing and rustling in the chocolate box ; voice-parts added to music intended to be self-sufficing (Gounod's *Ave Maria*) : the step from this kind of thing to Braga's " Angel's Serenade " set for piano and mandoline, is not really very long. There are, of course, some transcendent masterpieces in the genre, of which Liszt's settings of Schubert's songs are probably the greatest ; and Busoni's piano version of the Bach *Chaconne* is astonishingly successful. But Elgar, Schönberg, Sir Henry Wood and Stokowski have all sailed too near the wind to be above reproach.

This month brings an interesting contrast in transcriptive essays. I am unaware who " Cailliet " may be (the label does not honour him with a Christian name and Grove knows him not), but his *Suite* from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, " scored for modern orchestra," is an excellent example of how not to do it. To be sure, the music is in itself so magnificently beautiful that its marmoreal features shine through the welter of pseudo-Wagner with which " Cailliet " has impertinently decked it. But the harmony is abominably thickened, like a bad cook attempting to improve her gravy with " browning " ; and harps are used, not to point the accents of a recitative, but—inadmissably—to add lusciousness to the middle parts. Finally, " When I am laid in Earth " simply cannot be rendered by an oboe or cor anglais : it absolutely demands the characteristic quality —roughened with tragic feeling—of the human voice. However, as I said before, the material is so good that some may be able to listen through " Cailliet's " accretions, especially as the performance and recording, by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (H.M.V.), put it across with enormous gusto.

It is a relief to turn from this phoney stuff to William Walton's restrained settings of a number of Bach airs and chorales for the Sadler's Wells ballet, *The Wise Virgins* (H.M.V.). It was both wise and clever of Mr. Walton to have avoided what for most people is the typical Bach—i.e., those sewing-machine fugatos which are apt to become so tedious because too lengthily elaborated. (Moreover, the trouble with severely contrapuntal music, in which all the parts are equally important all the time, is this : when it is set for a single instrument or an ensemble with only one tone-colour throughout the register, once more than two parts have got really working it is impossible for the average ear to disentangle them ; all one hears is a kind of diffused whirr from which, at moments, a theme flies out, only to be quickly reabsorbed.) Instead, he has explored the Cantatas and brought up some gems of astonishing loveliness, of which " Sheep may safely graze " will probably have the greatest appeal, though " See what His love will do " is scarcely less moving, in its grave magnificence. Incidentally, Mr. Walton, who conducts the Sadler's Wells Orchestra in these records, takes the latter movement rather faster than Mr. Lambert did in the theatre—to my mind an improvement, for the quicker tempo preserves the pastoral character of the movement, which is lost by dragging. The instrumentation is uniformly masterly and to a large extent Bach's own; where inner parts had to be filled in, Mr. Walton has done his work with exquisite tact. Drums are used, but with the greatest discretion. This is a couple of records of which, it is safe to say, you will never tire. The recording is impeccable.

There is no reason to speak less highly of a new set of the most attractive of Bach's piano concertos—that in *F minor*, played by Edwin Fischer and his chamber orchestra (H.M.V.). Fischer takes the first *allegro* very *moderato*, thus adding to its architectural solidity. The Largo is one of Bach's most sustained lyrical inspirations and the soloist delivers it with the utmost delicacy. This is an admirably succinct work; on side 4 is a curious and interesting little piece by Mozart, named *Das Donnerwetter*. This was written in 1788 and is a Country Dance (but not so as you'd notice). It is very sprightly and evocative, in the discreet manner of its day. The thunder is minus one of Beethoven's and minus several more of Berlioz's; and there is no lightning. Here, for once, is a fill-up worth having. Do not miss these two discs, of which the recording, again, is extremely good.

It seems a long time since the companies favoured us with a Mozart Piano Concerto, and although we should have welcomed one that had never been recorded before, there will no doubt be many who will prefer Louis Kentner's performance of the *Concerto in A* (K.414) to the already existing one of Kathleen Long (Decca). To me the only clear gain seems to be on the orchestral side, which is by the London Philharmonic under Sir Thomas Beecham (Col.). This is far more incisive than that of the older set, and in the Andante more in the mood of the music. Personally, I do not feel that Miss Long yields anything to Kentner in the first and last movements, where his touch is a trifle inelastic; but in the lovely Andante, with that recurrent murmuring figure that somehow (most mysteriously) confers on the movement the air of a Romanza, there is no doubt that the present performance is the better, because smoother and more measured. Mercifully, Kentner uses Mozart's own cadenzas, which were in this case much more fully written out than most of the shorthand hieroglyphs that he jotted down for his own guidance in extemporisation. The concerto as a whole is not one of those in Mozart's grand manner, being lyrical and reflective throughout. It is comedy rather than drama, but comedy of the highest order. All things considered, when choosing recorded music to accompany and mitigate the siege of England—music that shall not merely entertain, but nourish and exalt the spirit—I think it would be hard to find better than the *corpus* of Mozart Piano Concertos, the best of which are now available to collectors in outstanding recordings. Add to these the symphonies and string quartets of Haydn, the works (especially the songs) of Fauré and Debussy, and you will possess a musical world whose formal perfection distils the tragedy of life into an essence that involves reality without attempting to copy or compete with it. Art in wartime should all be of this kind; it will be time enough, when peace comes, to turn back to the grim heroisms and stringencies of a Beethoven or a Sibelius symphony. Even Wolf, for all his sensuous beauty and variety of mood, possesses too plangent a voice for these times. There is enough explosive matter about, as it is.

That being so, the exhilaration of pure malignancy should hardly have much appeal for us just now. Yet there is no question that, of all composers except Strauss and Busoni, Liszt understood best how to express wickedness in music. The *First Mephisto Waltz*, which has not been recorded lately and now gets a superbly fine performance from the London Philharmonic under Weingartner (Col.), is rather less profoundly Satanic than the Finale of the *Faust Symphony* (which anticipates it by six years); but it has a violent, sensual beauty of its own, though the writing perhaps suggests rather too much its composer's pianoforte technique. On side 4 is Beethoven's very peculiar Overture to *The Ruins of Athens*, a late work (op. 113) which deserves careful attention.

Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slave* is the kind of piece which, to speak frankly, I cannot pretend to judge. All I would say is that—like Monte Carlo—it is exactly what you expect to find it. The recording, by Sir Adrian Boult and the B.B.C. Orchestra (H.M.V.), is excellent and very noisy in the right places.

Chamber music is represented this month by Mendelssohn's *Variations Sérieuses*, played by Alfred Cortot (H.M.V.). The performance and recording leave nothing to be desired, and the work itself would, I suppose, generally be reckoned among Mendelssohn's most successful compositions for the piano. It is, that is to say, ingenious, melodious, eminently professional—and, of course, serious. Yet it has none of the individuality of the *Sonata in E*, of the *Prelude and Fugue in E minor*, or of some of the *Songs without Words*. Though I be blown sky-high for saying so, I must record my opinion that there is not a bar of these variations that might not have come from the pen of one of Mendelssohn's followers, such as Reinecke or Rheinberger—not to mention other good academicians like Saint-Saëns. "*Voilà bien de la mauvaise musique bien écrite!*" as Camille Mauclair (I think) exclaimed, at the conclusion of one of Saint-Saëns' chamber music works. There is a lot to be said for official music, and "advanced" persons who cannot be induced to listen to, for instance, Parry's "Blest Pair of Sirens," lose a great deal. The only danger in preferring the kind of music to which this and the *Variations Sérieuses* belong, lies in the fact that its harmless and emollient quality is apt to soften the critical muscles and so render them unable to withstand the vigour and intransigence of genuine inspiration.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 556

Set by C. Urchin

Since the music-halls are closed, we offer the usual prizes for the best baroque description of a music-hall artist.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, c/o Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford St., S.E.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, Oct. 14.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 554

Set by Fred Oyster

Everyone likes talking about his favourite characters in fiction; but one hears less of the *bête noir*. Competitors are invited, then, to discuss—abusively, analytically, indirectly, fantastically, as they choose—the character in fiction they most detest. No restrictions except in length—250 words.

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Report by Fred Oyster

Detested characters fell roughly into three classes : those the authors meant to be detestable (a comparatively small class), those intended to be lovable, or at least tolerable, those in whom the author detected faults but not nearly so many faults as the reader. The last two, of course, imply criticism of the author and these entries were the most interesting and lively. Dickens, after scoring a success with Uriah Heep in Class I, suffered heavily. From Mr. Chadband it was a short step to the brothers Cherryble, Scrooge after his conversion, Pickwick himself: these advertisements of a Glaxo-fed goodness seem to have repelled competitors as much as, I confess, they do me. Since, however, it is only too easy at this time of day to pull away the props from a moralist so emotionally precarious, I shall quote instead from a tribute to Dickens :

> DEAR SIR, (writes Martin Walsh),—The "Character" I most dis-like in fiction is Urhia Heep. Why? Well he has followed me all through life. Has a child he was there on God's alter (I was an Alter boy). "Yes, I'll light the candles Sir" etc. Later at work he took the bosses dinner to warm. At night school he took the books away. Then the war came yes he was there an Officers Batmay, Yes sir, No sir, ever so *humble* was Urhia Heep. . . .

A number of once warm favourites came off badly. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (the one for his poses, the other for his smug stupidity), Lady Chatterley and her lover, Jeeves, Bob Pretty, Bulldog Drummond, Becky Sharpe, Jane Eyre. Not all these hatreds—those for Jeeves and Bob Pretty, for example—are put forward with the light certainty they need. And competitors have led me down some strange alleys. A Baconian sends in verses modelled on Father William.

Several competitors preferred verse. The best of these was Stanley J. Sharpless :

Even as a kid I found Farrar's Eric
Damned esoteric,
Smelling so fantastically of the deanery
That by contrast I longed for a bit of venery.

And there was wit in Towanbucket's *Wimsey :*

No bloodhound he : of tender ruth,
A verray parfit gentle sleuth ;
And going swift from bad to worse,
He swaps great chunks of Donne-ish verse
To give his far too bloodless page
The highbrow's touch that is the rage.

He goes on, however, to contradict himself by saying that "Peter is the Housemaid's Dream." Well, he isn't. But Bulldog Drummond perhaps is. (C.F. Rathbone sent in a pretty Bulldog).

Prizes to be divided between Charles Furbank and Ellen Evans.

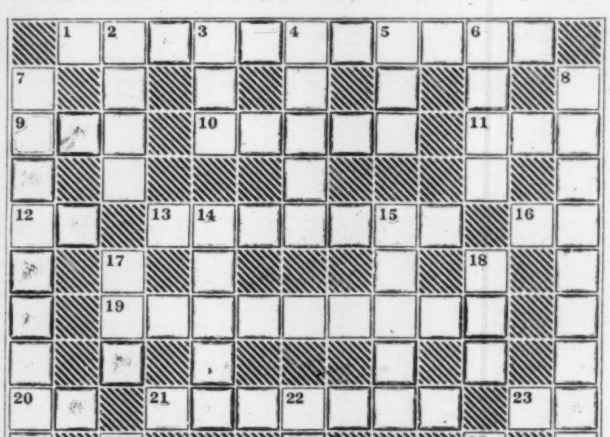
Mrs. Sayers' titled hero, as his name suggests, is an unpleasant character, though the whimsy is essentially his author's and not his own. He is, I think, the most glaring example of excogitation in commercial fiction to-day : that process whereby authoresses' adolescent dream heroes are endlessly presented in scenes capable of displaying their bravery, gallantry, batting, high-diving, wine-bibbing, bell-ringing, book-buying, and so on and so on, never forgetting their shell-shocked memories of their heroism in the last war. All these and many other qualities are combined in Lord Peter Wimsey. He far outstrips Ouida's guardsmen, for while they are somewhat haughty and aloof, he's a Dale Carnegie boy and always wears a smile, so that while a large number of aristocratic relatives are insisted on, every Boots' subscriber is made to feel he has a real pen-pal in Peter Wimsey. He has the same recommendations to popularity as intimate radio talkers, folksiness, fake democratic sentiment, and immense snob appeal. But where, until recently, he got ahead of everyone else was with his culture. He is nicely set off with erudite quotations for chapter headings of the "Urn Burial" and "Anatomy of Melancholy" variety, while his conversation is larded with literary allusion, so as to give the simple-hearted reader the impression he's combining education with his detective fiction.

What it comes to is that Lord Peter Wimsey is just a big piece of cheese and Mrs. Sayers and her associates make thousands a year out of the vermin he ensnares. CHARLES FURBANK

Now I may not be much of a judge when it comes to pen-pushing, but I reckon that old man Thackeray gets Milly Sedley all wrong. And he's not the first guy neither to be fooled by a pair of pop-eyes and a smarmy voice-box. W. Makepeace is always letting off steam about that doll's pretty ways and her soft carryings-on. But Mill ain't soft. No, sir! What she don't know about hooking sugar-daddies good and hard would just about cover half a guinea-pig's tail. For one thing, she's always turning on the waterworks when there's a man about, but does her nose get red and swell up, and are her sparkling eyes bloodshot ? Not on your life ! That Jane keeps the glycerine bottle handy. And look how she treats young George ! That kid's sure got guts but she sets about turning him into a dumb sap. Kind and loving to everybody ? She's only good to the old folks when there's visitors around. Ma Sedley ain't got no cause to have fancy ideas about her gal's sweet temper. The Ladies' Sewing Guild is always handing Becky the frozen mitt, but I reckon myself it's better for a dame to let down her back hair so's everyone can see, than for her to wear an angel-wig and make-believe it's all her own. ELLEN EVANS

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 1

Set by V. S.



ACROSS

1. XX or kisses from Judas. (6 hyphen 5).
9. What Venus de Milo cannot do to her teeth? (3).
10. rev. Like the writer's trembling. (5).
11. Make catsup of course! (3).
12. rev. and 20. Suppress that ruddy light. (4).
13. rev. A writer's attribute. (7).
16. Miss —— holds services for the masses. (2).
19. Supports the lower leaves. (9).
20. See 12 rev.
21. Sounds like Lady Godiva's riding habit. (7).
23. See 14, it's no good by itself.
26. After 20 is the right age for writing musical drama. (3).
27. . . . Though it's rather rude. (5).
29. rev. Lug across the border. (3).
30. Fair proof that relations and friends get all the knocks? (4 & 7).

DOWN

2. Oh, thousands or units. (4).
3. The boy with the retroussé nose. (3).
4. rev. Anna and her seven sisters. (5).
5. rev. and 28 Descriptive of a trunk full of blood. (6).
6. rev. Lament of a Manx girl. (4).
7. A teetotaller took leading place among bores. (11).
8. B double E (8 & 3).
14 and 23. Litter. (7).
15. Call me "swine" just for fun? (5).
17. Save up for a Diogenes Shelter (3).
18. As softly as a serpent. (3).
22. rev. Not correct for a young lady. (5).
24. rev. High as a tree. (4).
25. Little brother, that is the cheese. (4).
27. Fill up the tankard. (3).
28. See 5 rev.

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," "NEW STATESMAN AND NATION," c/o Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, London, S.E.1.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

STOCK EXCHANGE ABOVE-GROUND—THE BATTLE OF THE GAP—SAVINGS AND BORROWINGS

SHOULD the Stock Exchange go underground? As it is already dead, but not yet buried, you may think that this is the right place for it, but the Committee persists in closing the "House" doors at the first sound of the sirens and sending members home to their offices or bars. The "Jim Crow" plan does not appeal to them. The "House" has a glass roof and the Jim Crow might conceivably spot a little business going on and fall through the glass in his excitement. It is a pity that the Committee did not think of providing an underground room, a moderate-sized chamber would hold all the jobbers and brokers likely to do any bargains, before they bought an option on the expensive and unpracticable floor at the Denham film studios.

* * *

A fierce "battle of the gap" is now being waged in the financial field. I refer to the gap between national expenditure and revenue. For the year to next March the gap was estimated at £2,107 millions (tax revenue being only £1,360 millions) and the opposing good and evil forces in this battle are new savings on the one side and inflation and borrowings on the other. I am afraid that new savings will never be able to close the gap, in spite of Captain Crookshank's exportations. The small investor is doing his bit by saving at the rate of about £450 millions a year, but the big investor has so far failed to come up to expectations. Indeed, the issue of 2½ per cent. National War Bonds 1945/47, which up to September 24th had yielded only £218 millions, must be regarded as a flop. I never understood why the Treasury ever sanctioned such a redundant issue as a five-to-seven year bond at 2½ per cent. It was unnecessarily extravagant to entice the joint stock banks to lend at 2½ per cent. when they could be made to take up Treasury Bills at 1 per cent., and it was hopeless to expect the insurance companies to lend at 2½ per cent. when they could not "live" under 3½ per cent. I suggest that this 2½ per cent. issue of National War Bonds be closed forthwith and a new longer-term issue of 3 per cent. National War Bonds at a small discount be launched to carry on the big investors' fight. If the Treasury collects £1,000 millions a year from big and small investors together, it will be doing well. It could then reduce its gap to £1,107 millions.

* * *

Unlike the lost battle of the gap in France, this failure to close a gap of £1,000 millions a year does not mean that the financial war is lost. An increase in the floating debt by £1,000 millions, which the gap, of course, implies, is not necessarily inflationary. Borrowings, unlike German tanks, can be harmless. In the previous year the floating debt increased by £802 millions with no real inflationary effect, as Mr. Keynes observes. If the present increase in the floating debt avoids direct borrowing from the Bank of England, which would be inflationary, but assumes the form of Treasury bills taken up by the Exchange Equalisation Account (through sales of gold), by Dominion Governments (through an increase in their sterling balances in London), by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (through an accumulation of reserves), by manufacturers (through an increase of their liquid resources, and by the banks (through the investment of the idle deposits of their customers)—all this would be non-inflationary borrowing. Moreover, an increasing proportion of the gap is represented by Government purchases abroad paid for not only in gold (which swells the Treasury Bill Issue) but by the requisitioning of dollar securities held by private investors. This is not generally appreciated except by the unfortunate holders of the dollar securities which have been sequestrated. So Captain Crookshank was quite wrong in telling his Coventry audience that "not until we are saving at the rate of £40 millions a week (£2,080 millions a year) shall we be on a really good wicket." It will not be necessary to save so much if we continue to export gold and securities, but, as I have said, the period of financial strain is only just beginning and will not be seen at its worst until about the end of the present financial year. The battle of the gap will then become fierce and if big and small savings are not by that time considerably larger, we may have to call upon General Keynes to hurl in his army of compulsory savings.

* * *

By the grace of the Treasury, holders of dollar securities not yet requisitioned can dispose of them in New York or Canada as from October 1st. These securities were shipped months ago to Canada for safe custody (and easier confiscation?) and it has taken time to sort them out. I would not be in a hurry to sell. The next requisitioning order cannot be long delayed. What has upset the Stock Exchange is that the Treasury has destroyed the London market in dollar securities. Obviously no business can be done in London if delivery of the securities cannot be effected. This week the jobbers have been meeting to discuss proposals which they are submitting to the Treasury for a resumption of business on the basis of transfers of title by deposit receipts. I hope the Treasury will meet them.

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LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE.
(UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)
SESSION 1940–41

The Governors have decided that teaching for all day students in the session 1940–41 shall be continued in Cambridge. It will not be possible to resume lectures in London for evening students, but substitute arrangements for tuition may be made for those who have already registered.
Students wishing to study for the degrees of B.Sc. (Econ.), B.Com., LL.B., for higher degrees, for the Certificate in Social Science or in Mental Health, for the Diploma in Public Administration, or to pursue general courses in the social sciences, should apply for admission immediately to the Secretary, London School of Economics and Political Science, Cambridge (Telephone: Cambridge 55294. Telegrams: Poleconics—Cambridge).

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